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Liber cui Titulus (A Freſh Suit againſt Independency, *&c.*)

JANE, *R. P. D.* Hen. *Epiſc. Lond. à ſac. dom.*

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A FRESH SUIT AGAINST Independency: OR THE National Church-way VINDICATED, THE Independent Church-way CONDEMNED.

First, *By the HOLY SCRIPTURES.*
Secondly, *By REASON.*
Thirdly, *By the Judgment of the most Eminent Divines of the Reformed Churches abroad, as well as at home.*
Fourthly, *By a great Experience amongst our selves, as well as in all other Countries where those Principles have taken place.*

By the AUTHOR of the *Stop to the Course of Separation.*

- Lamb

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord.

LONDON, Printed for *Walter Kettilby*, at the *Bishops Head* in St, *Pauls* Church-yard. 1677.

A

FRESH SUIT

AGAINST

Independency:

OR THE

National Church-way

VINDICATED,

AND

The Independent Church-way

CONFUTED.

LIBRARY OF THE
UNION
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY
NEW YORK

By the AUTHOR of the Step to the Temple, &c.

LONDON, Printed for Walter Kettilby, at the Bishop's Head in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1677.

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

READER, *though honeſt godly men happen to differ in other things, yet they all agree in this, that all men ought to value their life, by their uſefulneſs in the World, that he that doth moſt good, liveth moſt to the ends for which a man was born; that though other men may be ſaid to* be *as the Beaſts, yet that no man is worthy to be ſaid to live, but he that liveth to glorifie God by doing good, as God himſelf doth, wherein the dignity of the humane nature conſiſteth; and that though to do good to the bodies of men, is a great charity, yet to prevent miſchief unto, and to do good to the Immortal Souls of Men, is a greater: For that end do I write this Book, God is my witneſs, divers honeſt upright well-meaning Men and Women, ſome few before, but infinite numbers ſince the*

overthrow of the Government, have fallen into the hands of Church-dividers, that firſt filled their minds with ſcruples about Conformity to the Church of England, *after that cut them totally off the Communion of the Pariſh Churches, though they were the places in which they were born, and in which they had been bred and edified, and by this means have involved abundance of good people into the guilt of the two dreadful ſins of Schiſm and Sedition. For that in the Church of* England, *whereof they are members, the true word of God is preacht, the true worſhip of God is celebrated, the true Sacraments of the Goſpel Adminiſtred by perſons of publick allowance, free from eſſential corruptions, or any ſinful thing, impoſed as conditions of Communion, and therefore 'tis a moſt abominable and ungodly Schiſm to ſeparate from her Communion: The Separation of the new Presbyterian Separatiſts, I endeavoured to put a ſtop to, by writing a little Book in* 1672. *called* A Stop to the Courſe of Separation, *wherein I anſwered all their main pleas for their practice, and ſhewed the inſufficiency of them to juſtifie their Separation.*

Now my ſcope in this Book is to reduce the followers of the old Independent Browniſts to the Communion of the Church of England *again, not by railing and reviling the perſon of any body, but by ſhewing the falſeneſs of thoſe tenets*

that

that at firſt miſled them, and by that honeſt means to reach their underſtandings, convince their Judgments and Conſciences, that they are in an error in their Separation, both in Judgment and Practice.

There are ſix principal Tenets of the Independent Brownists among others, which when they had entertained them, they forced their Separation from the Church of England. *Firſt, that National Churches ceaſed with the Jewiſh Church. Secondly, that Prelacy in the Church is Antichriſtian. Thirdly, that particular Congregations are by Chriſts Inſtitution to ſtand Independent. Fourthly, that the government is now to be popular. Fifthly, that Chriſt intending a more ſpiritual Church, will for the matter have the Church compoſed of real Saints. Sixthly, that for the Form it muſt be by mutual particular covenanting, from which two, ſaith* Robinſon, *the Church riſeth and is conſtituted. Hereupon they conclude, and boldly teach their followers that the Pariſh Churches of* England *are no true Churches of Chriſt, becauſe they want both matter and form of a true Church, and therefore Separate from them into diſtinct bodies in oppoſition to them, if it may be to pull them down to the ground.*

Now though it be very true that the firſt Nonconformiſts urged divers other things againſt the Church, as certain defects in the Liturgy, Go-

vernment and Discipline, and then the Ceremonies which did occasion some degrees of Nonconformity to the Church, yet they were at the same time against Separation. There was never seen a total Separation from the Church, till these Independent Brownist principles prevailed, whereby they concluded the Parish Churches to be no true Churches of Christ, and though the Apologists in 1643. when they Printed their Apologetical Narration, would be thought to differ from the old Independent Brownists, touching the matter and form of our Parish-Churches; yet experience hath proved their substantial agreement with them by their practice, separating from them as they did, and continual gathering Churches out of them into distinct bodies, in opposition to them as they did.

Now to reduce the upright that have erred through Infirmity, to the Communion of the Parish Churches of England again, I do in this ensuing Discourse shew how they are deceived in every one of these Tenets, that caused them to separate from the Church.

First, I prove that the National Church-way agreeth both to Scripture and Reason, and therefore is Gods way now as much as ever it was, and the Independent Church-way agreeth to neither, and therefore is none of Gods way.

Secondly,

Secondly, In my Answer to the Objections against the National Church-way, I prove that the reasons of erecting Prelacy in the National Church of the Jews, are all in being for the National Churches of the Gospel, and that therefore the government of the Church by the Ministry, standing in a subordination with Bishops, and a chief Bishop over the whole in every National Church, is so far from being unlawful or Antichristian, that 'tis absolutely the best government where Princes of the true Religion are at the Head, whatever it may be in other places, under other circumstances.

And, Thirdly, That particular Congregations standing Independent, hath no footing in the word of God.

Fourthly, I prove that popular Government is not only unscriptural but Antiscriptural, and most horribly absurd.

Fifthly, That though Christ hath designed a more Spiritual Church under the New Testament, by bringing Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel, and by vouchsafing richer means to attain holiness, yet he hath not altered the frame of the Church touching the qualification of Church-Members from Typical holiness to Real holiness, as the Independent Catechist teacheth, but the qualifications of persons for Church-Communion by divine Institution, are for substance the same to all intents and purposes.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, Touching the form of a particular visible worshipping Church, which Robinson *of old said, was by particular mutual covenanting of a particular people. The Catechist to the same purpose saith,* 'Tis formed by a holy band and special agreement. *I prove the quite contrary, that a particular visible Church may be without any such Covenant, and that there is no such particular Covenant to be found in the Word of God, whereby any particular Church of the New Testament or old either, became formed into a Church.*

That which I desire of Dissenters is, that they would consider seriously what I have here discoursed, upon these heads and divers others in this Treatise, for the conviction of their errors and mistakes in all those Tenets that forced their Separation from the Church; and I pray God grant all honest upright souls good Knowledge and good Judgment, and such a measure of the Spirit of Humility and Self-denial, that they may be able to retract what they have said or done amiss.

Constancy in the truth is no doubt a great vertue, but when men have erred, to continue in their error, for fear of the disgrace of Inconstancy, *is a great* vice. *He loveth himself too perversly, that had rather persons should continue in error, that have been deceived by him, than discover his own mistakes: Yet this is the case, I fear, of too*

many

many in England, *men that in their young time have been catcht up by Church-dividers, and lockt into parties, and headed them, are not able to accept conviction of their error, for that then they muſt lye down under the ſhame of being reputed raſh and inconſiderate. Hence the earneſt offer of Arguments for Conviction of their error, though never ſo cogent, though confirmed by the teſtimony of the generality of learned men in all Countries, and by the loud voice and effectual teſtimony of experience, yet ſhall work no more than the blowing a Trumpet in the ear of a dead man. I have therefore no great expectation of any great ſucceſs by this Book, upon perſons that the ſword of Schiſm hath already cut off from the Communion of the Church; but am not without a lively hope of doing ſome good, by ſtopping the progreſs of this reigning Vice, wherein if I have a little ſucceſs, I ſhall have a great reward for all my ſtudy and pains in writing it.*

And now before I conclude, let me give a word of advice to all young men, Scholars, and others, that through the grace of God *have attained to a lively ſenſe of* God *and another life in their youth, I would fain poſſeſs all ſuch of the benefit of my ſtudy and great experience, being on the ſixty fifth year of my age, that it may coſt them nothing.*

The Admonition and Advice I would give to all young men, is this,

Firſt,

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Firſt,

First, To remember the words of Jesus *the Son of* Sirach *to his Son,* My Son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptations. *Satan hath his* temptations, snares, wiles *and* darts, *beware of them. Amongst others of his wiles this is one, When he findeth the hearts of men fenced by the spirit of holiness, that temptations to sensuality cannot enter, he presently applieth himself to the head, to corrupt mens judgments if he can, and to make them proud and conceited, so that if he cannot make men Worldlings or Sensualists, he will endeavour to make them Schismaticks and Hereticks and Seditious persons, it being all one to him whether he destroy men by the sin of* Chore *or of* Cain. *Again, we have found by woful experience in* England, *that persons have met in the same mischievous effects and evil practices from differing principles. Have some men slighted Family Duties, the Observation of the Lords day, frequenting the Publick Ordinances, hated the Ministry, disobeyed Authority from the spirit of Prophaneness? Others have done the same from the spirit of Error, Schism and Heresie, and therefore all men have as much need to take heed of the spirit of Error and Schism, as of the spirit of downright Prophaneness.*

Now Secondly, The way to be safe from Satans temptations to spiritual sins, is for a man to know himself, *and to live under the actual sense of*

of his own nothingneſs and impotency, a man that knoweth himſelf knoweth that he is but a poor finite and fallible creature, that having loſt original righteouſneſs, is become ſubject to err, continually labouring under the diſeaſe contracted by the Fall, and this knowledge will make a man humble and modeſt, and if ſuch a man happen to conceive an Interpretation of ſome Scriptures that croſſeth the ſenſe of the generality of godly learned men in all Countries, much more if his Notions croſs the ſenſe of the Univerſal Church in all Places and Ages, his humility will then prompt him to ſuſpect his own opinion, he dare not be dogmatically poſitive in ſuch a caſe, he dare not ſay to all Princes of Letters in all Countries, you are all fools, I ſuch a one ſee more than you all; in lowlineſs of mind he will eſteem others better and wiſer than himſelf, he will not truſt to his own heart, nor lean to his own underſtanding, nor be wiſe in his own conceit, and then his Modeſty, the conſtant companion of Humility, will not ſuffer him to make any troubleſome adventures to diſturb the Churches peace, but if he hath Faith, he will have it to himſelf, much leſs will he be ſo preſumptuous and daring, as upon a private opinion of his own to ſeparate from ſuch an eſtabliſht Church as the Church of England is, that all the Reformed Churches have given the right hand of fellowſhip to. The want of theſe two

ertues was and is one great occaſion of all Non-conformity to the Church of England, and all the ungodly Separations from it. Keep humility and modeſty, and you will be ſafe from this dangerous and deadly temptation, as Calvin calleth the like.

Thirdly, If as you grow in Years, Parts, Learning and Holineſs, the fire of Divine love burn in your breaſt, and that you grow zealous of the glory of God, and the ſalvation of mens ſouls: now you muſt look to be buffeted by Satan, and beſides he will uſe all his arts and devices to ſtop ſuch a man in his career, becauſe one ſuch man threatneth his kingdom in the hearts and lives of men, more than ten dull men of not ſo good a converſation. Now if you keep humble and modeſt, and keep your place in the Church, where the Laws have fixt you, holding the Faith once delivered to the Saints, in a pure conſcience, if you live in humble obedience to Authority, keeping your mind free from unneceſſary ſcruples, then your godly zeal will be of admirable uſe in the Church, it will be like a flaming fire burning in the Chimney, the proper place, which warmeth all the houſe; but if you contract unneceſſary ſcruples about the Church, and at laſt fall into the Errors of Separation, as many hopeful men have done, and ſo ſeparate from the Church, your zeal now will be like fire burning under the ſtairs, which will burn the houſe down: and for ſuch their

Parts,

Parts, Learning and fine Abilities, are not only loſt and unuſeful to the Church, but they prove miſchievous and deſtructive to it, and this is what experience, the great Informer of mankind, hath taught us ever ſince the Reformation, but eſpecially theſe laſt forty or fifty years.

And now I humbly beſeech Almighty God to heal our Diviſions, and in order thereto, to diſpoſe the ſpirits of men of better abilities than I am to put to their helping hand, to bind up the wounds which our ſins and Satans malice, and the adverſaries cunning, have made in the body of this Church.

A FRESH SUIT AGAINST Independency.

Consideration the First.

LET all honeſt men that have been ſeduced into the paths of *Independency*, conſider that the principal Authors of that way in *England*, in their Apologetical Narration, ſet forth in 1643. about the time when they ſet on foot ſeparation in *London*: Themſelves ſpeak in that Apology, as if they were uncertain whether they did well or ill, whether they were in or out of the right way. For they ſay they were reſolved not to make their preſent judgment and practice a binding Law to them for the future. And that in a *Apol.* p. 11.

jealouſie of themſelves (as well they might) they kept this reſerve, to alter and retract whatever ſhould be diſcovered to be taken up out of a miſunderſtanding of the Rule. So that they acknowledge themſelves doubtful, whether they underſtood the Rule or no.

Now then conſider where was the humility and modeſty of this action, which the Lord Jeſus both commandeth and commendeth in all his Diſciples. Theſe men under theſe great uncertainties, and notwithſtanding their doubtful mind, proceed not only to diſcourſe, but to practiſe, and that in a matter of a moſt tremendous nature, by ſeparation to throw the great Houſe of the Church of *England* upon heaps, to try an experiment of a new Church-way, which they could not tell whether it was right or wrong. Surely then, without any violation of truth or breach of charity to the men: ſaving all the reſpects and good thoughts due to them for any good, which was in them otherwiſe, this act muſt be acknowledged to be a moſt raſh preſumptuous act, ſavouring of a raſh high ſpirit, and a ſtrong ſelf-will. This will appear more evidently, if you conſider,

First, That theſe men were not in a Pagan

gan Country, where they could have no opportunity of Conference and Advice with learned men for their ſatisfaction of any juſt ſcruple. No: Themſelves were members of a Synod of learned men at the ſame time, who after they had taken into conſideration their new notions, and heard of their purpoſes of ſeparation, by gathering Churches, Mr. *Edwards* utterly diſliked them. And particular men *writ* and *preached* againſt them, as pernicious to Church and State, and beſeecht them in the bowels of Jeſus Chriſt, to refrain the practice. *London Miniſters.*

Secondly, They knew the way was new both to themſelves and others, and therefore they could not be at any tolerable certainty that they were in the right, ſince the Scriptures upon which they build it, have been in the hands of learned men, of all Countries as well as in theirs, and they knew in their interpretation of them, they croſt the ſenſe of the generality of all men, of the moſt improved intellectuals.

Thirdly, They knew that the Church of *England*, which Independency ſeeketh to ruine, is a Church that hath brought forth, and brought up, as may learned men, Champions of the Proteſtant

Cauſe, and good Chriſtians as any Church in the World; and is the Church in which themſelves had their Birth, Education, Converſion, and by whoſe aids they obtained their Miniſterial gifts, and by whoſe bounty their Miniſterial Orders, and to whoſe Governours 'tis thought ſome of them, if not all, had ſworn Canonical obedience. Was not then ſeparation from this Church a raſh act?

Fourthly, They knew the difficulty for men that have once practiſed upon a miſtake, and headed parties upon it, ever to recover themſelves again, or the people they miſled, becauſe of the contempt that ordinarily followeth upon it, which to ſome men is worſe than death. Few men have the humility of St. *Auſtin*, to write Retractations. No, but when men have faln into errors, to defend themſelves, every light appearance ſhall paſs for a reality, halfs ſhall go for wholes, and ſhadow for ſubſtance, and all arguments for conviction of Error, though never ſo cogent, uſually ſeem little better than ridiculous filly talk. Theſe men knew all this: and yet for all that, preſumed to ſet on foot Separation, by gathering Churches out of the Pariſh Churches into diſtinct Congregations, under a diſtinct Government.

ment. Now let all honeſt men judge, whether ſo to do, was not to be raſh, ſelf-willed, ſelf-confident, truſting to their own hearts, leaning to their own underſtandings, looking upon their own things only, which the Spirit of God forbiddeth. And if ſo, whether every one hath not cauſe juſtly to ſuſpect this new Church way of Independency, both of groſs error and evil? Since it's apparent, it hath had its foundation laid, not in the Counſels of the Spirit of God, but in the ſpirit of raſhneſs, ſelf-confidence, and great inconſiderateneſs. This is my firſt Preparatory Conſideration.

The Second Preparatory Conſideration.

SEcondly, Let it be conſidered what they tell us, Page 1. of that Book, That time and experience of mens ways and ſpirits, are the trueſt diſcoverers, and ſureſt Judges of all men and their actions. And this is what others ſay, Truth is the Daughter of time. And the Apoſtle ſaith, the day ſhall declare it. That is, ſaith

Grotius, Time ſhall declare the work: If ſo, how can the way and ſpirit of Independency hold up its reputation any longer? Why do not all honeſt upright men, that have been deceived by the fine pretences of it, diſcard it, conſidering the miſchievous pranks it hath plaid in *England* theſe laſt thirty years? May not every one that will open their eyes ſee that the way and ſpirit of Independency hath been the way of envy, ſtrife, ſchiſm and ſedition? Hath it not offered violence to all obligations, Sacred and Civil? Hath it not trod moſt moral Precepts in the dirt, to preſerve it ſelf? Hath it not by this means involved many honeſt well-meaning men in their general purpoſes in the guilt of very bad actions; to the diſgrace of Religion, making formal lukewarm profeſſors; nay prophane perſons, think better of themſelves, and worſe of all zealous profeſſors and profeſſion of Religion?

Hath it not proved what Sir *Edward Deering* in the Houſe of Commons ſaid it would? a confounding Ataxy, Rent upon Rent, till all Church Communion be turned to Atoms? 'Tis too well known the ſpirit of Independency hath run the Independents into a multitude of little rings

and

and parties, and put them upon ſtanding at a diſtance one from another, as if they ſerved a different God; and who is ſo blind but may ſee this, that it hath firſt pleaded, then forced a Toleration of all opinions. And by this means let in a mighty flood of prodigious errors and hereſies into the Church, and at laſt made way for the toleration of Popery it ſelf in the croud, which could never be obtained ſince the Reformation, till the ſpirit of Independency had ſo filled the Nation with variety of opinions and ſchiſms, that Toleration of all ſeemed to ſome neceſſary to avoid partiality. And becauſe the body of the Church, ſince the overthrow of the Government, became ſo ſick by diviſions, that as on the one hand it ſeemed unable to endure the diſeaſe, ſo on the other, to abide the cure.

Whence came the ſeveral ſorts of Anabaptiſts, Seekers, Ranters, and that monſtrous Sect of Quakers? Are not all theſe enemies to Biſhops and Liturgy, and for Separation and Toleration with Independents? Do not all theſe Sects ſhade themſelves under the great Tree of Independency, and lodge in the branches of it? Nay, 'tis the Judgment of ſome that have made obſervation, that there are not

many that have turned Ranters and Quakers, till they first separated from the Parish-Churches, to enjoy a more pure Communion.

Godly Mans Ark. Epistle.

To this purpose Mr. *Calamy* telleth the people his experience. I could relate many sad stories, *saith he*, of persons professing godliness, who out of dislike to our Church-meetings (meaning the Parish Churches) begun at first to separate from them, and after many changes and alterations, are turned some Anabaptists, some Quakers, some Ranters, some direct Atheists. I have found by experience, *saith he*, that all our Church calamities have sprung from this root (mark that.) Again, *saith he*, he that separateth from the publick worship, is like a man tumbling down a Hill, and never leaveth till he come to the very bottom of it. This he publisht in 1658. about thirteen or fourteen years after the overthrow of Episcopacy, and the succession of Independency in the room of it, with which the spirit of Separation grew rampant. Mr. *Baxter* in 1655. writ his excellent Epistle to the separate Congregations, wherein he expresseth himself to the same purpose; So do sixty and odd Ministers of the City of *London* in 1660. tell their experience to

Declaration of the Ministers of Lond. 1660.

the

the ſame purpoſe: Their words I have ſet down in my *Stop to the Courſe of Separation*; To which I refer the Reader.

'Tis a known Caſe, that whilſt the National Church Governours and Government ſtood undiſturbed, there was no ſuch monſtrous Sects as Ranters and Quakers ever heard of *England*, ſo that theſe Sects may truly be ſaid to bear date from the overthrow of our fixt Eccleſiaſtical State, and the Commencement of Independency: And that not only as a bare Conſequent of Independency, but a natural Effect of the principles of it, as I ſhall ſhew in my inſuing Diſcourſe. My experience putteth me in mind of a notable ſaying of Dr. *Adam Stuarts*, in his Book againſt *M. S.* writ in 1644. I do in my Conſcience believe, *ſaith he*, that Independency is by conſequence much worſe than Popery. I ſuppoſe he meant it would at long run infer Infidelity, as by woful experience we have found it both in the Quakers and others: A thing not to be mentioned with dry eyes. *Anſ. to M. S. p. 53.*

If it be thus, then certainly the ſpirit and way of Independency is none of the ſpirit and way of God: for that is the ſpirit and way of truth, unity, peace, con-

concord, obedience; not of error, ſchiſm, ſedition, hereſie, diſcord and Apoſtaſie. Time and experience then, which they ſay, are the trueſt diſcoverers and ſureſt judges of all men and their actions, hath condemned the ſpirit and way of Independency to be from beneath and not from above. Let all honeſt upright men conſider this.

The Third Preparatory Conſideration.

BUT, Thirdly, They have Cauſe to ſuſpect this new way, not only becauſe 'tis new, though that be ground enough to ſuſpect it, and hath done a world of miſchief: but becauſe they have found by experience it hath carried them further from Communion with the Reformed Churches in practice, than they thought it would do: At firſt, when they made and publiſht their Apology, they there ſay, that notwithſtanding the Government of the Church in *England* was by Biſhops, which they are pleaſed to ſay exerciſed an unwarranted power and defilements in worſhip: yet they ſay, multitudes of the Pariſh-Churches were the

true

true Churches, and body of Christ, and that they both did and profeſſed they would hold Communion with them as the Churches of Christ, ſo far were they then from judging them Antichriſtian. *Apolog. Nar. p. 6.*

But for all this frank Confeſſion, whereby they amuſed their own followers, who wondred what they meant by it, knowing their way in *Holland*, and whereby they a little quieted ſome of the Presbyterians, after theſe Brethren became fixed in their new Church-way: what did they do but deal by the Pariſh Churches as Antichriſtian? Firſt, by continual gathering members out of them. A practice which they know in the nature of it tendeth directly to pull them down to the ground, as ſcattering the materials of a houſe tendeth to pull the houſe down. And then Secondly, by utter forſaking the Pariſh Churches, as to Sacramental Communion, and avoiding them as they do the Popiſh Maſs; their followers being very rarely ſeen ſince to join in any Pariſh Church-worſhip from that day to this.

So that in time they became downright Browniſts by practice: Notwithſtanding all the warning they tell us they had to take heed of the Rocks and Shelves they

ſplit

ſplit upon. So that time and experience hath diſcovered, that when they took up Independent principles, and practiſed upon them, they knew not whence they came, nor whither they went. They little thought they ſhould be carried off from Communion with all the Reformed Churches abroad, as *Holland*, *Scotland*, which was a horror to their thoughts, as they ſay, *Apol. Nar.*

The Fourth Preparatory Conſideration.

FOurthly, Let it be conſidered that the ſpirit of Independency, having run the Profeſſors of it into a moſt manifeſt and horrible ſchiſm, wherewith they are charged home by learned Mr. *Cawdry* and others. I ſay, this ſpirit putteth them, for their own vindication, upon deviſing new conceits about the nature of Schiſm, never heard of in the Chriſtian world before. As for inſtance, that the whole compleat notion and practice of Schiſm, according to Scripture, conſiſteth in wranglings and ſidings, in a particular Congregational Church.

Thus doth Dr. *Owen*, being charged effectually

ſectually by Mr. *Cawdry* with the guilt of Schiſm for his Independency: to eaſe himſelf, and all other Separatiſts, very boldly, but ſome think moſt abſurdly, concludeth thus, ſpeaking of Schiſm, *Whatever the Crime be, it lieth wholly within the verge of one Church, met together for the worſhipping of God, and Adminiſtration of the Ordinances of the Goſpel.* As if to be angry with a Brother without a cauſe, this was murther; but to ſtab him at the heart were none. *Owens* Tract of Schiſm, p. 30.

Now that this new conceit about Schiſm is as unreaſonable as ſtrange, will quickly appear, if we conſider the proper notion of the word; which all agree ſignifieth diviſion, or breach of union. Schiſm, ſaith Mr. *Hale*, by the ſound of the word ſignifieth Diviſion. *I beſeech you brethren*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *let there be no diviſions among you.* In the margent 'tis *Schiſms.* 1 *Cor.* 1. 10.

Now conſider, if he that raiſeth groundleſs differences in a Church, and by that means breaketh the unity of it, may truly be charged with Schiſm, and making diviſions: much more muſt he be charged with it, who having raiſed ſuch groundleſs differences, and perſiſting in them, cutteth the Church into pieces, which by divine precept and providence is united,

and

and ſetteth up another Church, in oppoſition to that from whence he ſeparated; becauſe he more effectually divideth and breaketh the unity of the Church by this laſt act, than he did by the firſt. And there is more of the malignant nature of uncharitableneſs in it, which is the turpitude of the ſin of Schiſm. So that Separation into parties, doth not alter the nature of the Crime, much leſs annihilate it, but perfect it. 'Tis Schiſm ſtill, but with this difference; that before Separation it was in the womb, but after Separation 'tis brought forth. Learned Mr. *Hale*, therefore ſpeaking of the Church Controverſie in *Holland*, ſaith thus: *So long as the diſagreeing parties went no farther than diſputes and pen-combats, the Schiſm all that while was unhatched: but as ſoon as one party ſwept an old Cloyſter, and by a pretty art ſuddainly made it a Church, by putting a new Pulpit into it, for the ſeparating party there to meet: Now what before was a Controverſie, became a formal Schiſm.* Till then he reckoned the ſchiſm but yet in the womb.

Hales *Tract of Schiſm.*

The moſt learned Biſhop *Bramhall*, thus, *Schiſm*, ſaith he, *is an Eccleſiaſtical ſedition, like to a mutiny in an Army, or a faction in a State, or ſeditious ſegregation of an aggregate body, into two oppoſite parties, which is the moſt*

Biſhop Bramhall *of Schiſm.*

moſt common uſe and notion of the word in Scripture. So *Acts* 14.4. *The multitude was divided*: This diviſion was not only in judgment (as perhaps the diviſion in the Church of *Corinth* was) but into parties, ſome were with the Jews, and ſome with the Apoſtles. And 'tis remarkable, that the Doctor doth not tell us by what name to call that ſin of running into parties, upon raiſing groundleſs differences, but leaveth his Reader to find another name for it than Criminal Schiſm, if he can find it. By this we ſee what a dreadful ſtrait he is in, the ſpirit of Independency having drowned him in the guilt of ſchiſm both negative and poſitive. And that reſpecting both the Catholick Church and his own particular National Church, by raiſing and fomenting cauſleſs diviſions and ſeparations. Now he would fain avoid the odium of being guilty of it, for that Schiſm being againſt the beſt of all graces, the moſt holy and beloved Charity, it muſt needs be one of the worſt crimes. The Lord convince him and humble him.

It is poſſible I may meet with ſome private opinion (ſaith the moſt reverend and learned Biſhop *Hall* the peacemaker) *which I may ſtrongly conceive more probable than the common,* *Biſhop Hall, p. 148. Book of Peace.*

mon, and perhaps I may think my ſelf able to prove it ſo, ſhall I preſently out of an oſtentation of my own parts, vent this to the world, and ſtrain my wit to make it good, by a peremptory defence, to the diſturbance of the Church; and not rather ſmother it in my own boſom, as thinking the loſs much eaſier of a conceit, than of peace?

P.80. In another place thus, *Heed muſt be taken that we do not raſhly determine of obſcure and doubtful verities, upon pretence of our private light, and that without ſure grounds we run not alone, and leave all Orthodox Antiquity lagging behind us. How eaſily we may err where we ſee no track before us?*

Had theſe and the reſt of the Counſels of this godly and Chriſtian Biſhop been followed, in his excellent Book, called *The Peacemaker*, the Church of *England* had not been at that paſs that now it is, by errors and ſchiſms. But wo is me, that through miſapprehenſions, begetting vehement and invincible prejudices, we deſpiſed the counſel of our teachers, and now mourn at the laſt. As the wiſe man foretelleth, *Prov.* 5. 11, 13.

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The Fifth Preparatory Consideration.

FIfthly, By experience it hath appeared further, that the Independents when they set up this way in *England* against the National Church way, they did they not understand themselves.

For whereas they say in their Apologetical Narration, thus, that to find out the positive part of Church-worship and Government, we searcht, say they, what were the first Apostolick directions, patterns and examples of the Primitive Churches recorded in the New Testament as a sacred Pillar of fire to guide us. And for all such cases wherein we saw not a clear resolution from Scripture, example, or direction, we still professedly suspended until God should give us further light; not daring to eak out what was defective in our light in matters divine, with humane prudence, the fatal error to Reformation. Now I say, it is manifest that herein they are deceived, because that the primitive pattern is no pattern to us in all things, no not in any but those things which the Churches practised upon

Apol. p. 3.

P. 10.

a moral reaſon, and that under the ſame or like circumſtances; that is, ſuch a reaſon as is perpetual, becauſe the ſame to all Chriſtians, at all times, in all places, under all circumſtances of ſtate and condition. There being many things commanded and practiſed upon particular accounts, proper only to the preſent times, under ſome circumſtances of State. In all ſuch things they are no examples to us at all. As for inſtance, 1. The holy kiſs, five times commanded by the Apoſtle, and was the common practice of the Church. 2. Annointing the head and waſhing the face in a day of faſt, poſitively commanded by Chriſt, with prayer that his Diſciples might not appear to men to faſt, *Mat.* 6. 17. 3. Waſhing of feet enjoined poſitively, *John* 13. 14, 15. and practiſed 1 *Tim.* 5. 10. 4. Community of goods; the common practice of the firſt famous Church, *Acts* 2. 44. 5. The Elders annointing the ſick with oil in the name of the Lord, *Jam.* 5. 14. 6. Suffering the Paſtors of the Church to labour for their own living. All which Examples, and ſome more like to them, are no examples for us to imitate; neither are they followed by the wiſeſt of the Brethren that ſeparate, though they have been by the

weaker,

weaker, till they became ridiculous, and then gave over again. I ſay then, whoever goeth to the Primitive Pattern, muſt go with two great lights in their hand: Firſt, The Primitive Pattern we would imitate, muſt be founded on a Moral reaſon. Secondly, Are we under the ſame or like circumſtances of State; then we may and ought to follow the Primitive Pattern to the full, but if the practice was founded upon a particular reaſon; either from the cuſtom of the place, ſome preſent exigent, or the like, and the circumſtances of our condition differ from theirs; it is dangerous to follow the Primitive Pattern. When Chriſt eat the Paſſeover with men only, without women, and in a private houſe, leaning; he never intended to be followed in this. When S. *Paul* wrought with his hands for his living, the Church being poor, and to cut off occaſion to enemies; he never intended to be a pattern to all Miniſters in that, in the ſettled ſtate of the Church, under quite other circumſtances. No, But as it was in the National Church of the Jews, That they which Miniſtred about holy things, lived of the things of the Temple, and they which waited on the Altar, were partakers with the Altar, *Even ſo*, ſaith

1 Cor. 9. 14. he, *hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.* So that the Apostle for Ministers maintenance in the settled state of the National Churches of the New Testament rather directeth us to the pattern of the Jewish Church, than to his own example in the Infancy of the Gospel.

Again, when Christ and the Apostles enjoined washing of feet at that time, & in those hot Countries where it was an act of charity; he never intended the literal observation of it in cold Countries, and in cold seasons, where it would be an act of cruelty. When Christ commanded his Disciples, in a day of Fast, to anoint their heads, it was to hide their fasting; but now with us for any to annoint their heads, it would proclaim their fasting.

Upon the whole then, as there is no urging a Primitive practice now, when the reason of the practice is out of doors. So there is no finding fault with present Church-practices now in Government and Discipline and Ceremonies, meerly for that the same is not to be seen in Scripture-pattern. The reason is evident: The Church is under far different circumstances of State. The Prophesies of the Prophets had not taken effect then, for

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the converſion of Kings and Kingdoms, as they have ſince, and bleſſed be God have in this Nation. There was then no King nor Queen to nurſe the Church, but to perſecute it. The different ſtate of the Churcheven in the Apoſtles time, from a few to a multitude, forced the Apoſtles to erect a new Officer in the Church, namely a Deacon, which was not in the Church at firſt. For the Apoſtles did all themſelves whileſt the Church was ſmall. *Judas* was treaſurer of the Lords money, after him all the Apoſtles, until the contention about Widows, ſaith *Gratius*. And here take notice, when the Apoſtle ſet up that new officer the Deacon, the Apoſtle urgeth neither Text for it, nor Revelation for it, but only Reaſon. *'Tis not reaſon that I ſhould leave the word of God and ſerve tables.* May we not then ſafely infer from this famous inſtance of the Apoſtle, that the Church is not tied to firſt patterns under different circumſtances of ſtate in the Church. In the Apoſtles time, ſaith *Bregwill*, the ſtate of the Clergy increaſed as the Church increaſed. Neither was the Government under the bondage of *Egypt*, and during the peace of the Land of *Canaan* alike. For the *Iſraelites* had firſt Judges, and after their State increaſed, Kings.

Right of Higheſt Power. p. 189. *Act.* 6. 2.

By what hath been ſaid, it clearly appeareth at what turn the Brethren have loſt their way, when they left the rode of the Catholick Church, and ſet up this new Church-way of Independency, which hath done ſo much miſchief in this Nation. They run to the Primitive Pattern, and practiſe upon it (as they think, but in that too they have been deceived) without any conſideration of the different circumſtances in the ſtate of the Churches in thoſe Pagan Countries, where they lived in the Primitive times, and the ſtate of the Church in *England*, where both Prince and People owh the true Religion. This is the reaſon of that Ignorant Queſtion. Where do you find a National Church in the New Teſtament? The Anſwer is eaſie. Where do you find a Nation with a Prince at head of it, converted to Chriſtianity in the New Teſtament? Wherever we find a Nation Converted, we find a National Church in a proper, formal, political ſenſe. Foraſmuch then, as the Brethren in their new way of Independency, have proceeded upon ſlight grounds, and that they have miſunderſtood the rule, 'tis expected that they make good their overture of retracting it.

The Sixth Consideration.

SIxthly, If the Independents will reflect and consider, 'tis impossible they should proceed with comfort in that destructive path. Because time and experience, which they say is the truest discoverer and surest judge of all men and their actions, hath manifestly discovered to themselves, as well as others, that the grounds they went on therein were weak. They tell us in their oft-mentioned Apology, That for all such cases wherein they saw not a clear Resolution from Scripture, example, or direction, they still professedly suspended until God should give further light, not daring to eak out what was defective in their light in matters divine, with humane prudence, which they call the fatal error to Reformation.

Now in process of time, these Brethren, or some of them, being put at the head of this Nation, professing Christian Religion, and trusted to manage Ecclesiastical affairs, for the good of the many thousand Parish-Churches which were to be supplied with able Orthodox Preachers,

for the edification, government and defence of the Church: They found themselves forced to let go the primitive pattern, the sacred Pillar they spake of, to be followed under the same or like circumstances of state the Church was in at that time, and betook themselves to humane prudence as others do, considering the state of the Church where they lived.

They first accept a Commission from the then Regnant power to try and approve the fitness of all such Ministers as should serve the several Parish Churches in the Ministerial imployment, with a charge to preserve the right of Patrons, and that in order to a set maintenance by Tithes. Secondly, hereupon they with divers others, some Ministers, and as I remember some Soldiers, do accordingly sit in Judgment at *whitehall*, upon the gifts, graces, yea the particular opinions of all persons offering themselves to be tried by them. Some they approved if they thought them godly, and that they hit their own judgment in some controverted opinions. Others they disapproved if they did not so, though of the same Christian Protestant Religion with themselves, men of parts, and free from scandal.

Now

Now let themselves and all the world judge, whether they did not eak out what was defective in their light with humane prudence (if that they did may be called Prudence.) Can the Brethren find in Scripture, where ever *Paul* or any of the Apostles or primitive Ministers, did ever accept a Commission from the Civil Power to try and judge the Gifts of Gospel-Preachers, or do any such things as these, any more than they can find a National Church, a Lord Bishop, the Surplice, Cross, or Common-Prayer-Book there. The Brethren may remember how their own friends complained of their prevarication, and at that time affirmed in plain words, "Their commission was to supply "the place of a Bishop, to give the com- "plement to the Parish Priest. Another in their own way thundereth in these words, "The Triers of the last Edition "are mounted upon Thrones of Authority "and Power, far above their Forefathers "the Bishops. And urgeth against them the same Arguments they were wont to press the Bishops with against Prelacy, from the fulness of Scripture, the wisdom and faithfulness of *Christ* above *Moses*, the danger of adding to the word of God, and the like.

Postle-thwart *voice from heaven.*

J. Goodwin *Triers Tried and Cast.*

The

The great accuser of the Brethren cast down. p. 98.

The Advocate of the Brethren Tryers (for they found an Advocate) made answer, *That the truth was, the old way of trying Ministers was by Bishops.* The Bishops being gone, the Parliament settled the power of Approbation in a Committee of the Assembly of Divines. That way ceasing with the Long Parliament, the then Regnant power maketh the Brethren, with others, Commissioners to that purpose. So that he confesseth, in this work of Trying and Judging Ministers, they were in good truth the successors of the Bishops: and hath no way to defend themselves against the old arguments urged against Prelacy, but by affirming as the Episcopal men were always wont to do. That Christ and his Apostles having left such Institutions, Rules and Directions, which are fundamental, and absolutely necessary for the constitution of the Church in general, did not descend to the inferiour points of regulation, touching particular Churches, upon great reason which he there expresseth, but left it to *humane prudence*, guided by the general rules of the word, to do all things for edification.

So

So that whereas the Apologists had said, Humane prudence was the fatall errour to Reformation, they found by Experience (which they magnifie for a true discoverer and judge of actions) that no publick proceeding for Religion in this Nation could be managed without it. And that their own Advocate is fain to make that plea in defence of their practice. Thus also in *New England*, in the point of Toleration, when the Ministers first went over thither: they went thither for Liberty of Conscience, crying out of the persecution and Tyranny of the Bishops, because of their Suspensions and Imprisonments for Non-conformity. Mr. *Williams* telleth us, that Mr. *Cotton* when he was in Old *England*, he was for the peaceableness of the Lamb, but now, saith he, he hath learned to speak the roaring Language of Lion-like persecution. Now the whole truth, (as I suppose) is this, that when Mr. *Cotton* and others found by experience the working of the spirit of Toleration; that it threatned the utter ruine of Church and State, as Mr. *Bayly* telleth us, *They then saw the necessity*

Bloody Tenet p. 90.

Baylys dissuasive. p. 62.

of

of restraining erroneous men from doing mischief, which they did not clearly see before. Now he writeth a Book against Toleration, and for the Magistrates power in matters of Religion, and useth the same Scriptures and Arguments that the Bishops and Episcopal Doctors were wont to use to that purpose. They by degrees proceed to such severities against their Non-Conformists, as was never known in Old *England* since the Reformation; and in truth such as can never be justified they were so barbarous, and fall so deeply in love with uniformity, and to such a hatred of Toleration, that they would not endure their fellow Non-Conformists, though Presbyterians, to dwell amongst them, without conformity to their new Church-courses.

A Narrative of New Eng. Church-Courses.

So that in truth, Experience, the great Informer of Mankind, hath justified the Principles of the National Church-way, and discovered sufficiently to all unprejudiced men, that the Independents, when they set on foot their new Church-ways, neither understood themselves, nor their Principles. What then remaineth for honest men to do, but to renounce that way and those principles

ciples which by experience they have found have deceived them?

The Seventh Conſideration.

SEventhly, 'Tis eaſie for the Brethren to find how the ſpirit and way of Independency hath deceived them, if they will conſider, that ſince their forſaking the National Church-way, becauſe of ſuperſtition, and becauſe of humane inventions in and about the worſhip of God, they abound with humane inventions in their Independent way; they have carried away divers from the Pariſh-Churches and imitate them. The Independent Miniſters, at leaſt ſome of them, preach by the help of Notes, and in various methods of their own deviſing, and both Miniſter and people ſing *Davids* Pſalms in Metre, and in divers tunes. Theſe are all humane inventions, and theſe are all performed in the worſhip of God, and there is no hurt but good in the uſe of them, becauſe they are referrible to the general rules of the word for edification, and the Brethren themſelves find they are ſo. But then they muſt acknowledge,

the

the ſpirit of Independency hath abuſed them, which hath taught them to inveigh abſolutely againſt the uſe of all humane inventions in the worſhip of God, and carried them off from the Communion of the Pariſh-Churches, becauſe of them: As Dr. *Owen* hath done, ſaying, the Saints will practiſe nothing in the worſhip of God, for which they cannot ſay, *Thus ſaith the Lord Jeſus.* But that which is more remarkable is this: That over and beſides the Humane inventions in the worſhip of God, which the Brethren uſe in common with the Pariſh Churches: The ſpirit of Independency putteth them upon abundance of humane inventions of their own, that are not only without the word, and beſides the word, but ſome of them quite croſs and contrary to the word, which they cannot prove againſt any that are in uſe in the Pariſh-Churches. Nay farther, the ſpirit of Independency hath ſo far prevailed, as to make them believe their own humane inventions for Gods Laws and Ordinances, which maketh them differ from the Church of *England* in the uſe of hers, as the Papiſts do in the uſe of theirs. And by this means have moſt juſtly deſerved the cenſure of ſinful

D. Owen Com. with God. p. 171.

ful adding to the word, which they most unjustly applied to the Bishops, because of the Ceremonies which yet they always affirmed to be indifferent in themselves, and by them enjoined only for decency and order, and alterable as the Church shall find cause.

If any one ask a particular of the humane inventions in the Independent way of their own devising and erecting: These are some of them among others. First, For admittance into their Churches. The particular Minister with his Assistants sit in Judgment upon the real holiness of persons, as a condition of admittance into the Church. A practice without all Scripture precept or president. All Scripture practice is manifestly to the contrary; as I shall have occasion to shew in the ensuing discourse. Secondly, The party propounding himself for admittance is delayed, some a quarter of a year, some half a year, some a twelve month, till the Congregation can have satisfaction of his real godliness. Mr. *Hooker* himself confesseth this practice of delaying persons, he can find no precept or example for. Thirdly, Their particular Church-Covenant, which they

Hooker of New Eng. In his Eccles. Pol.

they say formeth the visible Church: this is not only a humane invention but of dangerous consequence, as I shall shew. Fourthly, Church-government by a major vote of the Common people. Mr. *Baxter* saith, *a man may as soon find a Pope in the Scripture.* Fifthly, Making office-work common to unordained men. A desperate device to fill the Church with errors and schisms, and to overthrow order and destroy the just authority and maintenance of the Ministry. Sixthly, Denying Baptism to the infant children of Christian Parents, not members of an Independent Church; with abundance more. Mr. *Baxter* mentioneth no less then twenty points of superstition that belong to the separate Churches (though not all to every one of them) p. 289. *of his cure of Church divisions.* And in a Book called *A brief Narrative of some Church-courses in* New England, you may see more.

The Eighth Consideration.

EIghthly, It would help the Brethrens Conviction of the error and evil of Independency, if they would consider and lay to heart, that Independency doth as it were of course breed Anabaptism: so that if they judge Anabaptism a pestilent error, as others do, they should renounce their Independency, which is so natural an occasion of it. St. *Austin* said of Anabaptism, that it shaketh the very foundations of the Church. And holy *Philpot* the Martyr, said, it was undoubtedly set on foot by the Devil to destroy the Gospel: and you know the Reformed Churches abroad cry out of it, not only as a notorious error, but as the shame and hindrance of Reformation. Now that Independency inferreth Anabaptism, appeareth first from Reason, secondly from Experience.

In his Letter to an Anabaptist Fox.

First, from Reason, particularly from the odium they put upon the Parish Churches and Ministry, as no true Churches of Christ. Dr. *Owen*, a man famous in this way, and generally approved by the

Owen of Schism, p. 197, 198.

party, rendreth all true Church-ſtate loſt in *England* in the Pariſh-Churches. Doth not he himſelf, ſaith Mr. *Cawdry*, labour in this Book to prove that the Adminiſtration of Ordinances in our Aſſemblies are null, our Ordination null and Antichriſtian from the beaſt, and charge them that inſiſt upon it as keeping up what God would have pulled down; and conſequently the Ordinances Adminiſtred by us, ſaith Mr. *Cawdry*, are null? and why then is he not Rebaptized? more to the ſame purpoſe *p.* 162. of the ſame Book. Now if the Church in which the Doctor received his Baptiſm be a falſe Church, and the Miniſter that Adminiſtred it a falſe Antichriſtian Miniſter, how can he be ſatisfied with the Baptiſm received in ſuch a Church, and from ſuch a hand, any more then if he had received it from the hand of a Turkiſh Prieſt. Secondly, from the Independents affirming that nothing is to be done in the worſhip of God, but what we have precept or example for. The Saints that hold Communion with Chriſt, ſaith Dr. *Owen*, they will admit of nothing, practiſe nothing, in the worſhip of God, but what they have his warrant for: now what that warrant is, he explaineth in the next words. Except it come

Independency a great Schiſm. p. 165.

Owen of Com. with God, p. 171.

come in his name, with *Thus ſaith the Lord Jeſus*, they will not hear an Angel from heaven. They know the Apoſtles themſelves were to teach the Saints only what Chriſt commanded them, *Mat.* 28. 20.

Now the Doctor not being able to ſhew one plain precept from Chriſt, ſaying *Baptize Infants*, though there be ground enough for the practice, nor any clear example of the Baptiſm of Infants in Scripture, the people upon his own principles conclude peremptorily there is no ground at all for the practice, and run in multitudes to Anabaptiſm, and there is no ſtopping them.

Thirdly, From a conceit that as Chriſt hath altered the frame of the Church from National dependency, to Congregational Independency; ſo alſo the qualification of Church-Members, from Covenant holineſs to real holineſs. This appeareth by the definitions they give of Goſpel Church-members in all their Books.

The Churches of the Goſpel are to be made up of living ſtones, ſay they, that they may be a ſpiritual houſe. Regeneration, ſaith the Catechiſt, is an Indiſpenſable condition in a member of Chriſts Church, from *John* 3. From hence Anabaptiſts infer, that if Chriſt intended under

Independent Catechiſt, p. 106.

the Gospel, that the Church-members should be all such holy persons, that the Churches may be pure. It could not be his mind that Infants should be Baptized, and by that means let into the Church, because Church-Infants, as well as others, being all born in Original sin: And that 'tis impossible to know how they will prove when grown up. It would be a flat contradiction to his main design, to let them into the Church by Baptism in their Infancy, but to defer it till they are grown up, and profess faith, and give real signs of grace first, this agreeth to it. This is the reasoning of divers eminent men, that began at Independency, and upon this ground amongst others slipt into Anabaptism. As Mr. *Lawrence*, Mr. *Blackwood*, Mr. *Allen*, and many others.

Now as this is true in Reason, that Independency inferreth Anabaptism, so it is true in experience also. If the Brethren were challenged to shew one Church of the Independents, where Infant Baptism held its reputation, as it doth in the Parish-Churches of *England*, they could not do it. In *New England* where the Independent Church-way hath taken place, 'tis said that a considerable number of the posterity of Christians,

upon

upon one account or other remain unbaptized, without any visible difference between Christians children and Heathens children. Mr. *Paget* in his *Arrow against Separation*, saith, *that out of a few members in the* Brownists *Churches, more fell to Anabaptism, then out of many thousand members of the Presbyterian Churches among the* Dutch, *or out of all the* English *Reformed Churches there.* *Browns* Church at *Middleborow*, abundance turned Anabaptists, which discontented him. *Smith* himself the great Leader in this new way, turned Anabaptist. So also did *Cann* at last, as I have heard. *Johnsons* and *Aynsworths* Church at *Amsterdam*, abundance of them turned Anabaptists, and were therefore Excommunicated. So also hath it fallen out in *England*: The Churches that came from *Holland*, many of the Members fell to Anabaptism, both of *Sidrack Sympsons* and *Thomas Goodwins*, and some separated upon it into distinct Congregations. The same may be said of the Churches that began at Independency among our selves here in *England*, as Mr. *Jaceys* and Mr. *J. Simsons*, and others. The reason is plain, because no man can be true to the principles of Independents and Brownists, but they must turn Anabaptists, for the reasons

Bayl'yes *Dissuasive*

aforesaid. So that except the Brethren intend to turn Anabaptists, they must renounce their Independency which inferreth it.

The Ninth Consideration.

NInthly, The absurdities that follow upon Independency are so gross, that it can be no hard matter to detect even from thence the notorious mistakes thereof; for from truth can come nothing but truth. Ile not take notice in this place of the absurdities that follow upon. Independency strictly taken; as Congregations disclaiming any governing Church power over them. I will only insist upon the monstrous absurdities that follow upon one single point of Independency, called *the Church Covenant*, which they say formeth and giveth being to the Church. They say Saints are the matter, and mutual particular covenanting the form. Thus *Robinson.* To this effect the Author of the *Independent Catechism*, said to be Dr. *Owen*, He saith, *'Tis not civil Cohabitation in political precincts, nor usual meeting of Christians for the worship of God, that is sufficient for union;*

Catechism, p. 112, 117. 89 compared.

but

but the Church is formed by a holy bond and ſpecial agreement.

Now I ſay, this firſt unchurcheth all *Chriſtendom*, except their own Churches: for if this voluntary particular covenanting or ſpecial agreement of a particular Congregation form the Church by Chriſts Inſtitution: then 'tis eſſential to all true Churches, and then not only all the Pariſh Churches of *England* are falſe for want of it, but all the Churches in the world are unchurched for want of it. For though they have the matter, if they want the form, they then want one of the conſtitutive cauſes of the Church: for it is the form that denominateth and giveth being. Secondly, It rendereth Chriſt to be a King without a Kingdom, a head without a viſible body, almoſt ever ſince Chriſtianity was in the world. For that ſuch Independent Congregations, formed by a particular Church Covenant within themſelves, was never heard of, nor ſeen in the world till lately. Their miſtakes from Scripture about it, ſhall be diſcovered before I have done. Thirdly, It rendreth the Lord Chriſt who is truth it ſelf, a notorious breaker of his word; and therefore an abominable and abſurd opinion. He promiſed to be with

his Apoſtles and their Succeſſors in the Miniſtry to the end of the world. And ſpeaking of the viſible Church for whoſe uſe he committed the keys of Doctrine and Diſcipline to the Miniſters by St. *Peter*: he ſaith expreſly, *The gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* But if this particular Church covenant were Chriſts Ordinance to form the viſible Church and give being to it; and that the Chriſtian world never went this way in forming the Church, then Chriſt forſook the conduct of his Miniſters and Churches, and that as ſoon as he made this promiſe to be with them, and hath ſuffered the gates of hell to prevail againſt them. Fourthly, If this Church Covenant of Independency *form* the viſible Church by Chriſts Inſtitution: then none of all the Primitive Fathers of the Church, none of the glorious Martyrs and Confeſſors that loved not their lives to the death for Chriſt's ſake. None of all the great Lights of the Reformation abroad, *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Muſculus*, *Bullinger*, *Beza*, *Melanchthon*, beyond the Seas. Nor Biſhop *Cranmer*, Biſhop *Ridley*, Biſhop *Hooper*, Biſhop *Jewell*, Biſhop *Uſher*, at home. I ſay none of all theſe famous Worthies, with many others, dead and alive,

Mat. 28. 19. 20.

alive, were nor are ſo much as members of Chriſts Church. And if thoſe holy Martyrs were now alive, they ſhould have no right to the Lords Supper, nor their children to Baptiſm, becauſe no members of a true Church, for want of the form that denominateth it. And is not this abſurd to affirm? Now if one point of Independency infer all theſe groſs abſurdities, 'tis high time to renounce it, and return again to the National Church-way.

The Tenth Conſideration.

TEnthly, Let it be conſidered, that divers ſober perſons in *England*, Scholars and others, who in their youth were taken in the ſnares of Independency and Separation, have been reduced by ſtudy and experience, ſome half way, others quite back to the Communion of the Church of *England*, which though it be no ſufficient argument of the truth of either way, yet may put all ſerious honeſt men upon further enquiries: Ile inſtance in ſome few.

One

One Mr. *Ellis*, a learned man, and an able preacher, happened at *Colchester* in the war time, to fall into the same errors in judgment and practice; his experience reduced him long before the King and Bishops returned. He hath written his Retractation, and therein lamentably bewaileth his sin and misfortune, that ever he had to do in that way.

Mr. *Rayworth*, a good man, and a man of good learning and parts, happened also upon unhinging the Government, to fall into the errors of Independency and Separation; proceeded so far as to gather a Church, and walkt in that way a while: in time became sensible of the evil of it, and the mischiefs it did to the publick, and returned to the Communion of the Church of *England* again, lived in humble obedience to authority, and died minister of *Shore-ditch*.

Mr. *Nye*, one of the Apologists, after all his strugling for Independency, came so far back before his death, that he writ a manuscript to prove the lawfulness of magistrates appointing ministers for the people, and the lawfulness of hearing the Conformists Preaches in the Parish Churches, as Mr. *Baxter* telleth us. And I have heard that upon his death-bed he desired it might be printed.

Thus

Thus alſo did Mr. *John Robinſon*, a man of good learning, ſharp wit, and excellent parts, who in his young time became ſo unhappy as to improve Non-conformiſts principles to actual ſeparation from the Church, and proved a bitter Adverſary. He cried out againſt National Churches, Biſhops, Miniſtry, Liturgy, and all Pariſh Church-worſhip as falſe and Anti-chriſtian. And to make the people loath to frequent the Pariſh Chutches, he applieth the ſecond of *Epheſians* and twelfth to them, as if they were no better than Churches of Pagans. But for all this, before his death, though he did not publickly renounce his errors, and come quite back to the Communion of the Church of *England*, as ſome others had done before him, and as ſome others did after him. It is evident he came back one half of the way, printing in his latter times againſt his former Books. *The lawfulneſs of Communicating with the Church of* England *in the Word and Prayer*, as Mr. *Bayly* taketh notice.

Reaſons diſcuſs'd, p. 87.

Baylys *Diſſwaſive p. 17.*

Mr. *William Allen*, an antient citizen of *London*, of above forty years ſtanding; a ſtudious man all his days. In his young time happened to fall into the errors of Independency, and after that to Anabaptiſm, proceeded ſo far as to write Books

to

to plead their cauſe; yet his after-ſtudies and great experience, returned him again to the Communion of the Pariſh-Churches. And in the year 1659. he writ his Retractation of Separation, and divers other good Books ſince. And not only Mr. *Allen*, but divers others both men and women, that have been taken with the fair pretences of Separation, have upon their experience quitted thoſe aſſemblies and maintain full Church-Communion with the Pariſh-Churches.

And for my own part, I do confeſs that in my young time, I was alſo overcome of the arguments for Independency and Anabaptiſm; and for a conſiderable time walked in thoſe ways, but my ſtudy and experience together returned me in the year 1658. to the Communion of the Pariſh-Churches again. For that the principles and practices of Independency and Anabaptiſm, though they have a face of truth and holineſs, and are therefore apt to take with godly minds: yet in truth have no real foundation in the word of God; are pernicious to the publick, and have produced ſad effects upon the ſpirits and lives of men. And ſecondly, they are Churches founded upon a ſchiſmatical bottom, and live in the odious ſin of

ſchiſm,

ſchiſm, becauſe they have broke the unity of the Church without ſufficient cauſe; a crime which, I thank God, I now know the meaning of, but did not know when I was a young man. A ſin which the Antients had ſo deep a ſenſe of the evil of it, that one of them ſaith, Alms-deeds, no not martyrdom it ſelf, can expiate the guilt of it. And though the commonneſs of committing it amongſt us ever ſince the overthrow of the Government, hath quite taken away the ſenſe of the evil of it, as the commonneſs of committing other foul ſins uſe to do; the ſin is nevertheleſs filthy in it ſelf, and offenſive to Almighty God. For theſe and divers other good cauſes, which I purpoſe to alledge before I have done, I do in my conſcience believe, it is the duty of all men that in their young time have been miſled into theſe by-ways, to diſſolve thoſe meetings, and to return to the Communion of the Church of *England* again: To own their own Mother, which they for a long time have ſinfully deſpiſed, notwithſtanding her womb bare them, and her paps gave them ſuck.

The Eleventh Consideration.

IN the Eleventh place, let it be considered the spiritual Judgments of God that are known to have followed many of the chief Leaders of Separation from the Reformed Churches in all Countries wherever Separation hath been practised.

There are but four places in the world that I have read of, where those principles and practices have taken any deep root, *Germany*, *England*, *Holland*, *New England*; and in every one of them the hand of God seemeth to have gone out apparently against divers the chief men that led the people into the schism, as well as against abundance of the people themselves. *Calvin* took notice of Gods Judgments that befell the men that broke the unity of the Church in his time, and therefore admonished all men to take heed of the temptation, calling it a dangerous and a deadly temptation, saying, that no man escaped the due punishment of his divorce: He saith, they bewitched themselves with most pestilent errors and wicked dotages. This

This hath been observed here in *England* concerning our rigid Separatists, as well by the old Non-conformists to the Church of *England* as Conformists; and both parties have urged the consideration upon the Separatists, almost in all their writings ever since the Reformation. *Bernard* against *Robinson*, *Ball* against *Can*, of antienter date, *Baylyes* dissuasive from the errors of the times, Mr. *Baxter* in his fourteenth Chapter of his Book of Baptism, and in his Epistle to the Separate Churches. Mr. *Samuel Clark* and Mr. *Edmond Calamy* of latter date. Clarks *Examples.*

'Tis verily believed that if the Names of all the Leaders and people were taken, that have been destroyed or hurt by the principles and practice of Independency and Separation, since the overthrow of the Bishops and Episcopal Government, they would fill a greater Volume then the Book of *Martyrs*: Some have turned Ranters, some Seekers, some Quakers, some Jews, infinite numbers of Enthusiasts, and some downright Atheists, as Mr. *Calamy* saith.

John Lilburn told Dr. *Bastwick* he met with forty New Sects in the Army. This was when the Army was composed of Independents; some so blasphemous and pro-

prodigiously impious in their opinions, that 'twas not for a Christian to name them. And the Doctor saith, most, if not all, were first Independents, such as separated from the Parish Congregations as unholy, and were, saith Dr. *Bastwick*, of their new gathered Churches, and followers of their Ministry.

Now in my humble opinion, there is three or four considerations which maketh these severe experiences upon the Separatists very considerable.

First, The known goodness and usefulness of abundance of these men in the places where they lived, while they kept their Communion in the Parish-Churches. They were temperate in opinion and practice, a comfort to the Ministers, who were the instruments of their Conversion from sin to holiness; as also to the Neighbourhood they were forward to all acts of piety and charity. But after their separation having been possessed that the ministers call to the ministry was false and Antichristian, that the Parish Churches were no true Churches of Christ; but men of the world, they hated their ministers, and slighted the people. It was *Now* that God gave them up to a Reprobate mind, and vile affections.

while

while they were in the Parish-Churches, they kept truth, humility, modesty, meekness, charity; lived to the glory of God and good of men: upon their separation lost the glory of all these vertues.

Secondly, The sin of Schism, into which I conceive they fall that separate from the Reformed Churches, particularly the Church of *England*, is a sin of a high nature and a deep dye. 'Tis the sowing discord among Brethren, which God reckoneth one of the seven things that are most odious to him. 'Tis the rending and tearing the mystical body of Christ (for which he gave his natural body) limb from limb. 'Tis a sin, which to prevent in the Church of *Corinth*, the Apostle *Paul*, is as it were a man on his knees to them; *Now I beseech you brethren that there be no schisms among you.* It is a sin was severely punished in the instance of *Chore* and his company, who said to their superiours, as now our Separatists do to ours, *you take too much upon you, you Sons of Levi, all the Congregation is holy every one of them.* And the Apostle *Jude* foretelleth that in Gospel times there would be those that would slight and revile authority;

Prov.6.

1 Cor.1. 10.

Numb.16.

and that would not be afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities, and break the unity of the Church as they did, and ſhould even periſh as they had done. And God by the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaith to perſons that deſpiſe their Brethren, ſaying *ſtand off, we are more holy then you*, as all our Independent Separatiſts do. They were as ſmoke in his noſe; and Chriſt Jeſus himſelf condemned the Phariſee for deſpiſing the poor Publican in Church-Communion, and ſaith, *he went home from the Temple juſtified rather than the Phariſee*; and *Moſes* imprecated Gods vengeance on Anti-miniſterial ſpirits, in theſe words, *Smite through the loins of them that riſe up againſt the Tribe of Levi, and on them that hate him, that they riſe not again.*

Iſa. 65. 5.

Deut. 33. 11.

Martin, *his proper name was* Richard Overton.

No wonder then, all this conſidered, that *Martin Mar-prieſt* the ſon of *Martin Mar-prelate*, and ſo many thouſands of his followers, in railing and reviling the Biſhops, Miniſtry, Liturgy and Church of *England*, and ſeparating themſelves from it, ſtriving to deſtroy all. No wonder, I ſay, that himſelf, and divers with him, are at long run found in the filthy ditch of ſenſuality, himſelf turning Ranter; others in the gulf of Hereſie, and infinite numbers

bers in the dungeon of Quakeriſm and Apoſtaſie: Becauſe God in Scripture threatneth the crime of Schiſm and Sedition, and ſpeaking evil of dignities, with ſore puniſhments, and giveth us examples of inflicting them upon commiſſion of the crime.

Thirdly, If the Authors of the new Church-way had been ſent of God with this errand, they might in reaſon be looked upon as ſeconds to the Apoſtles; becauſe if their doctrine be true, they came to Reform all Chriſtendom, and put all Chriſtians in all Countries into a right way of framing Churches and governing them, which they were ignorant of before. It might rationally be expected that if they have not Apoſtolical gifts, to work miracles, to confirm their new doctrine, they ſhould have Apoſtolical aids of the holy Spirit to preſerve them in a holy courſe of life, and to keep them from deſtructive opinions and practices, becauſe Chriſt, whoſe errand they pretend to come upon, hath promiſed his ſpecial preſence with his ſpecial meſſengers, and is ſaid by St. *John* to hold his ſtars in his right hand. But experience in all Countries hath proved that the ſtars

of Separation from the Reformed Churches, and particularly from the Church of *England*, very many of them upon their Separation (but never before) have been forſaken of Gods holy ſpirit in a wonderful and prodigious manner, and proved wandring ſtars from one mad opinion and practice to another, till they ſplit themſelves, which the Books I refer to abundantly declare. This conſideration will have the more weight, if it be conſidered in the fourth place.

That the known godly Biſhops and Miniſters of the Reformed Churches, and particularly of the Church of *England*, which ſome of the Separatiſts have been wont to revile as Antichriſtian Miniſters, *Baals* Prieſts, and what not, to make them vile, they have been known to live uſefully and holily, and dye honourably. And though this Argument ſhould not of it ſelf amount to a demonſtration, they are out of the way of God, yet ſure it hath enough in it to reach the end I aim at, which is to awaken all honeſt upright men to review the grounds of thoſe principles and practices, which have wrought ſo peſtilently, and been ſo pernicious to the Church.

I do humbly and freely confeſs, that beſides what I heard from others, and what I read in Books to this purpoſe, my own knowledge and obſervation of the truth of much of what I here aſſert, it did awaken me to conſider where I was when I was engaged in that way, and put me to a ſtand: If a man ſhould walk up a lane, and ſee here lye a leg, there an arm, here a hand, there a foot, here a man ſtark dead, there one gaſping for breath, would it not make any man in his wits afraid of going forward?

This was my caſe, I ſaw abundance of Miniſters and People ruined by Separation, and running into Parties. I ſpeak not this to reproach the perſon of any man that hath been a Leader, or led into that way, I cannot do that but I muſt reproach my ſelf to a great degree: No, the Lord knoweth what I ſay is out of pure love to the precious ſouls of men, that I know both by reaſon and experience are like to ſuffer by it, and the true Intereſt of Religion and the Proteſtant cauſe, which I verily believe is endangered by it.

The Twelfth Conſideration.

TWelfthly and laſtly, Add unto all theſe eleven paſt conſiderations, this in the laſt place, to make thoſe that are already mentioned ſit cloſe to the Conſcience. That in the year 1644. one Mr. *Buchanan* a Scotch Gentleman, ſent divers Letters beyond the Seas to the moſt eminent Divines of the Reformed Churches, both to *France*, *Holland* and *Geneva*, deſiring an account from them of their Judgments concerning the principles of Independency: They ſoon anſwered, and from all parts agreed in their ſenſe of the evil and danger of them. And all as one man, admoniſh *England* to take heed of admitting thoſe principles to take place amongſt us, ſaying, if that way ſhould prevail and be eſtabliſhed amongſt us, it would certainly bring upon us all that confuſion in Church and State, which we have ſince experienced. And at *Charentown*, *December* the 26. 1644. The National Synod of *France* fearing the contagion of this poiſon, (ſpeaking of Independency)

dency) leſt it ſhould get ground amongſt them, thought fit to make ſpecial orders, and give ſpecial charges to all the Provinces to beware of it, in theſe words; *we judging the ſaid Sect of* Independents, ſay they, *to be not only prejudicial to the Church of God, in ſo far that it endeavoureth to bring in Confuſion, opening a gate to all kind of ſingularities and extravagancies, and taking away all means of any remedy to the evil, but alſo moſt dangerous to the State, where if it had place, there might be as many Religions ſet up as Pariſhes or particular Congregations; doth enjoin to all the Provinces to take heed the evil take no foot in the Churches of this Kingdom.* To the ſame purpoſe did all the reſt of forreign Divines and Churches conclude againſt it, when the way of Independency began to prevail amongſt us, whoſe ſenſe I purpoſe to ſet down in their own words, in the latter end of this Book, that ſo the Brethren may ſee how they perfectly agreed in their Judgments with our own Divines at home concerning the deſperate evil and danger of Independent principles. The ſenſe of the Presbyterians of the evil of them, was ſo great, that they beſought the Brethren, even in the bowels of Jeſus Chriſt,

that they would conſider ſeriouſly before they practiſed upon them, in their vindication of Presbyterial Government, being grieved at the heart that the extirpation of the *Engliſh* Epiſcopacy, ſhould iſſue it ſelf in Eccleſiaſtical Anarchy.

To ſum up all, and upon the whole matter if it hath proved thus:

Firſt, That the way of Independency was new and ſomewhat uncertain to the Brethren that firſt ſet it on foot.

Secondly, That therefore they promiſed to retract what they ſhould find amiſs.

Thirdly, That they refer us to time and experience to judge of their actions.

Fourthly, That time and experience hath judged it all againſt them, in that it hath involved them in the guilt of a horrible Schiſm, ſcattered the Churches, debauched abundance of the members, and forced their followers being charged with it, to eaſe themſelves by contriving new and abſurd notions about Schiſm, never heard of in the world before.

Fifthly, That they could never be true to their own principles, ſince they engaged in that way.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, If it hath filled their own Churches with dangerous humane Inventions.

Seventhly, And that it moſt certainly doth infer Anabaptiſm, and conſequently all ſorts of Heterodox opinions.

Eighthly, That it inferreth moſt horrible palpable abſurdities.

Ninthly, And that all this miſchief was foreſeen, and therefore the way of Independency cried out of by the learned men of the Reformed Churches abroad and at home, even when they were about to erect it, before ever it was tryed. If this be the caſe, as I have proved it is, I ſay now, what remaineth for honeſt godly men to do, but in the ſpirit of Repentance to put on ſackcloth, bewail their errors and Juvenile Temerities and hardneſs of heart, that no Inſtructions, Reproofs, Admonitions, Exhortations nor Tears could penetrate, and without any more ado to renounce the deceitful way of Independency, and return again to the National Church-way; by which they ſhall recover themſelves out of the ſin of Schiſm, and be reſtored to the Communion of the Catholick Church of Chriſt,

Chriſt, and make peace with their own Mother the Church of *England*, whoſe womb bear them, and whoſe paps gave them ſuck, and who now lyeth ſick and bleeding (God grant it be not to death) by the wounds received of her own Children,

Oh merciful God, that pittieth the ignorant and them that are out of the way, pardon the ſins, cover the infirmities, and pitty the errours of thy people, that through weakneſs of judgment have ſeparated from the Church. Incline their minds to reflect upon the grounds of their Separation, to conſider what hath formerly and ſhall now be ſaid for conviction of their errour, open their underſtandings to conceive aright, ſanctifie their Judgments to judge aright, ſubdue their wills to accept conviction of their miſtakes. And let the grace of humility and ſelf-denial, be given them in ſuch abundance, that they may be able to retract and reform whatever they have thought or done amiſs to the prejudice of thy Church.

Having as I hope, by theſe preparatory awakening conſiderations, prepared godly minds to conſider Arguments: I ſhall now

now addreſs my ſelf to pluck up the main principles of Independency by force of Argument, and ſhew to the Independents, that in ſetting up their new Church-way, they have not only *de facto*, loſt their way; but I ſhall endeavour to diſcover the particular turns, in arguing from Scripture, at which they loſt their way. If God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth.

And that I may do it to the beſt advantage, I deſign to deliver my ſelf in certain Propoſitions, and endeavour to prove them that directly croſs the chief of their Independent Tenets. And I'le begin with this in the firſt place,

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Propoſition

Propoſition *I.*

That the National Church-way is Gods way, notwithſtanding all the pleas of the Separatiſts to the contrary, for the juſtification of their ſeparation from the Pariſh-Churches of England. They ſay they own no ſuch thing.

But before I proceed, I'le ſet down what I mean by a National Church, or the National Church-way, and what I mean by an Independent Church, and the Independent Church-way.

By a National Church, or the National Church-way, I mean a multitude of Chriſtian Profeſſors, of ſaving Faith in Chriſt, inhabiting in one Nation, under one Civil Government, and where the Governors are Chriſtian, by the Laws united into one Eccleſiaſtical body (though parted into many Congregations) with a publick Miniſterial Church-governing power over the whole, both Paſtors and Churches, under the higheſt power;

power; and this I ſay agreeth both to Scripture and Reaſon.

By an Independent Church, or the Independent Church-way, I mean a particular Company of Chriſtians charitably judging one another real Saints, chuſing to themſelves a Paſtour as they think good, forming themſelves into a Church by a particular Church-Covenant or ſpecial agreement of their own deviſing, exerciſing all Church-power within themſelves, and diſowning any Authoritative Church-power over them. *See ſtop to the Courſe of Separation.*

This is the Independent Church-way: Now this way I ſay is contrary both to Scripture and Reaſon.

I now proceed to prove my firſt Propoſition.

That the National Church-way in the ſenſe delivered, agreeth both to Scripture and Reaſon, and therefore is the way of God. The Independent Church-way agreeth to neither, and therefore is none of the way of God.

Firſt, The Church of the Jews was a Church of Gods own inſtitution: And it was a National Church in a formal proper political ſenſe.

The

The particular worſhipping Churches all over *Judea*, meeting in their Synagogues, called by the Pſalmiſt, *the houſes of God*, were all ſubject to the Sanhedrim at *Jeruſalem*, as all agree. The particular Congregations did not ſtand independent, enjoying all Church-power within themſelves. And that this is Gods mind ſtill, that when the Gentile Nations ſhould be converted, according to the Propheſies of the Prophets, they ſhould ſubſiſt in the National Church-way. The doubting Brethren may eaſily be convinced, if they will lay aſide paſſion and prejudice, and will be pleaſed ſeriouſly and heartily to conſider theſe four things.

Pſal. 83. 12.

Firſt, That when God had always before him to form a Church to the beſt advantage for his own glory and the common good, when the people of *Iſrael* increaſed from a few to a multitude, even a Nation. Infinite wiſdom did then pitch upon this way of uniting the whole into one Society, with a governing Church-power over the whole, and hath never *Repealed it*. This way therefore muſt needs ſtand good under the New Teſtament, as well as under the

Old:

Old: becauſe it doth not ſtand with the wiſdom, faithfulneſs and goodneſs of Chriſt, to intend ſo great an alteration in the frame of the Church, from National dependency to Congregational Independency, and not to tell us ſo in the plaineſt words and eaſieſt terms imaginable, becauſe without ſuch a declaration, it would be impoſſible for the Church not to miſcarry.

Secondly, Jeſus Chriſt was King, Head, and Husband of the Church then as well as now, and therefore could not want affection to the Church then, no more than wiſdom to form the Church in the beſt way imaginable for Gods glory and the common good of the Church, as well then as now.

Thirdly, The uniting of the whole of the Jewiſh Nation into one body, with a common Church-power to govern the whole, was no point of the Ceremonial Law. It belonged not to any Temple-Ordinance, and therefore not Typical of any thing, as the High-Prieſt and Sacrifices were, but a thing of common right and general equity, not of a particular

right.

right. Neither was there any thing in the ſubordination of the Country Synagogues to the Sanhedrim, of any particular reſpect to their ſtate, in the Land of Promiſe given to them. *Grotius* therefore concludeth, that if the Jews would have received the Faith of Chriſt, there had been no cauſe why they ſhould depart from that Government, which the experience of many Ages did commend. And though the High-Prieſt was a Type of Chriſt, yet the whole Inſtitution of this Pontificate is not to be referred to this end alone. This eminence of one Prieſt ſerved for order alſo, ſaith this great Scholar.

Right of the higheſt Power.

Fourthly, The dangers and difficulties, for the prevention and eaſe whereof, God would have the whole Church of the Jews ſtand ſo united with a governing Church over the whole; they are the ſame now under the Goſpel that they were then, and therefore the National Church-way is Gods way now as much as then: And the Independent Church-way is none of Gods way, but a meer humane deſtructive device: except we ſhall ſay that Chriſt hath leſs care of the

the Church under the New Teſtament, than he had under the Old, which is abſurd. The governing Church power under the Old Teſtament had a power firſt to provoke, and not only ſo, but to require negligent perſons to do their duty, both the Clergy and Laity, 2 *Chron.* 24.6. Secondly, To ſit in judgment upon tranſgreſſors, *Deut.* 17.9,12. *Zach.* 3.7. Thirdly, To ſuſpend from the Prieſthood, *Ezra.* 2.62. Fourthly, To Excommunicate if they found cauſe, *Ezra.* 10.8.

Can it be imagined that God would take all this care for his Church then, and ſo little under the New Teſtament, that though the Church now have the ſame neceſſities, yet ſhall be left without the like ſupplies. Conſider we have in *England* near ten thouſand Pariſh Churches, muſt not we needs then have abundance of difficult caſes to reſolve, matters of common concernment to order, offences in inferiour Societies to reform, appeals to receive, injuries to redreſs, neglects in male-Adminiſtration to correct. Do not ſome Paſtours prove wicked, ſome Heretical, other Schiſmatical. And ſhall there be no governing Church-power to

receive Appeals, redreſs injuries, to heal the Scandals of offending Paſtors and Congregations. 'Tis ſo unreaſonable to imagine, that 'tis believed no honeſt conſidering man, freed from undue prejudices can believe it. 'Tis concluded a plain caſe, that if it might be conceived that great Nations of Chriſtians ſhould by Chriſt's order have no governing Church-power over the particular Congregations, it would follow irrefragably that the ſtate of the Churches under the New Teſtament, were far worſe in that reſpect then under the Old: And that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the King, Head, and Husband of the Church, hath leſs care for the Church now then he had then; which being a moſt vile and wicked conceit, reproaching the wiſdom, faithfulneſs, and goodneſs of Chriſt. I ſafely conclude, the National Church-way is Gods way ſtill, and the Independent Church-way a meer humane fiction and deſtructive device.

Further, let it be conſidered, that in all Communities the whole is concerned in the well-fare or ill-fare of every part. As in the Natural body, if the heel be prickt,

prickt, the tongue crieth out I am hurt, and if every part of the body were a tongue, it would do the ſame. And if a finger be cut off the hand, 'tis not only cut off the hand, but off the body too, and the whole ſuffereth by it, both in its beauty and ſtrength. Thus is it in the myſtical body of Chriſt; 'tis therefore reaſonable that no part ſtand more independent than needs muſt, but that every part in each Nation be united into one body, and all the parts fall under Governours appointed to take care for the whole, that it may not be in the power of any part to hurt the whole without controll. Neither doth it agree with reaſon, that any part ſhould be left to ſuffer, whileſt there is help in the whole to relieve them: but if all the parts have liberty and authority to ſtand Independent, the blind have both power and opportunity to throw one another into the ditch, as Mr. *Baxter* telleth us a Miniſter at *Bermudaes* did a whole Congregation, and as our experience in *England* hath informed us. Of this more afterward.

This is my firſt Argument for the National

tional Church-way. That the Jewiſh Church, by Gods inſtitution, was National not Congregational, and Chriſt hath no where repealed that way; and the reaſons of its continuing ſo, being the ſame Now they were Then: It cannot be but the National Church-way is Gods way *now* as well as *then*.

Secondly, To come nearer. The Prophets of the Old Teſtament, by the Inſpiration of the holy Ghoſt, have Propheſied of the being of National Churches under the Goſpel by divine Approbation: and therefore the National Church-way is Gods way ſtill under the New Teſtament as well as under the Old.

To prove this Aſſertion the more evidently, I ſhall ſhew theſe four things from the Prophets, which I earneſtly deſire the Reader to take notice of.

Firſt, That when the Prophets foretell the enlargement of the Church in Goſpel times, they ſtill predicate it of Nations and Kingdoms, with Kings to nurſe them, as the National Church of *Iſrael* had. And I ſay they predicate it of Nations and

and Kingdoms, noting not only multitude, but united orderly governed Societies.

Secondly, That the Prophets foretelling Chriſts calling of the Gentile Nations, his calling of them is to be underſtood of calling them into a Covenant-Relation to himſelf, as the National Church of *Iſraels* call was.

Thirdly, That by Gods taking the Gentile Nations into Covenant with himſelf, thoſe Nations do by that means take the Name of Gods people, Parents and Children in a ſpecial ſenſe, as the National Church of *Iſrael* did.

Fourthly, and laſtly, That for a Nation to be called Gods people, 'tis all one as for that Nation to take the Name of Gods Church. I ſhall ſhew theſe four things in order.

Firſt, The Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſpeaking of Goſpel-times, *Iſa.* 2.2. he ſaith, *The mountain of the Lords houſe ſhall be exalted above the hills, and all NATIONS ſhall flow unto it*; not particular Congregations *IN* Na-

tions only, much leſs here one and there one. By the Lords houſe is meant the Church, by comparing it to a mountain, is noted the wonderful largeneſs and bigneſs of it; by being exalted above the hills, is noted the notable viſibility and dignity of it. What then can the meaning be of all Nations flowing unto it, but all Covenanting Profeſſors of the true Religion, with their Children, as it was in the National Church of the Jews. If none could be ſaid to flow unto the houſe of the Lord, or be Goſpel Church-members, but here and there a particular Congregation in Nations, and that conſiſting of really holy perſons, and they ſtanding Independent, as Independents teach, the Lords houſe could not be called a mountain, but a mole-hill rather; neither could it be ſaid with truth that Nations flow to it, if all the Infants, which are a conſiderable part for quantity, and the moſt innocent part for quality, be left out of his houſe.

Let it be conſidered the Prophet ſaith, *All* NATIONS *ſhall flow unto it.* And the ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* 65. 1. ſaith, ſpeaking of Chriſt, *I am ſought of them that askt not after*

after me, I ſaid behold me, behold me, unto a NATION that was not called by name, ſpeaking of the Gentiles, as *Paul* the Apoſtle expoundeth the words, *Rom.* 10. 20.

The Prophet *Zachary chap.* 8. 22. ſaith, *Strong NATIONS ſhall come and worſhip before the Lord.* Let Diſſenters in the fear of God conſider, how a few ſcattered Congregations, ſtanding Independent, can take the name of a Nation worſhipping before the Lord, much leſs of ſtrong Nations. Doth not the ear try words, as the palat taſteth meat? and doth not my taſte diſcern perverſe things? A NATION ſignifieth an united govern'd Society: The word implieth not only multitude, but as the word (City, Army, Kingdom, to all which the Church is compared) they all denote Dependence, Government and Order. I ſay it implieth Order, and that not only of particulars in each part in reſpect of themſelves, but of all the parts in relation to the whole: If only here and there an Independent Congregation in a Nation worſhipt before the Lord, it could not be ſaid that Nation worſhipt before the Lord, becauſe

Independent Congregations in a Nation are but ſo many multiplied ſingularities, that have nothing of a whole among them.

The Prophet *Iſaiah* again, *Iſa.*55. 5. he ſaith, ſpeaking of Chriſt, *Thou ſhalt call a NATION which thou knoweſt not, and NATIONS that knew not thee ſhall run unto thee.* Now if the Queſtion be, what's meant by Chriſts calling of Nations, and the Nations running unto him. 'Tis Anſwered; Chriſts call of Nations is into a Covenant-relation to himſelf, as *Iſraels* call was, and by conſequence to make them National Churches, as *Iſrael* was: For this is a ſure rule, wherever the Covenant is, there the Church is. This is the ſecond thing I deſire ſhould be ſpecially noted.

This appeareth plainly from the teſtimony of divers Prophets. The Prophet *Zachary chap.*2. *v.*11. he ſaith, *Many* Nations *ſhall be JOINED to THE LORD in that day, and ſhall BE MY PEOPLE.* Here he foretelleth, firſt, That as at that time there was one Nation joined to the Lord, ſo in the days of the Meſſiah many

many Nations ſhould be joined to him, or be in Covenant with him, as at that time *Iſrael* was. And ſecondly, he ſaith, *And ſhall be my people*, that is, by this means, *viz.* by being in Covenant with me, ſhall become my people in a ſpecial ſenſe. The copulative particle, *And*, in this place, hath the force of the rationative, as many times it hath in Scripture. And 'tis as much as if he had ſaid, *and by this means ſhall be my People or Church.* 'Tis plain this is the ſenſe, by what we learn from the 16. of *Ezekiel ver.*8. where is ſet down the way of the National Church of the Jews, attaining the priviledge both Parents and Infants, of being Gods people in a ſpecial ſenſe. *I ſware unto thee, and entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine*; both Parents and Infants together, though the Infants could not underſtand any thing at preſent, and therefore *ver.*20,21. God layeth claim to all the Infants born in the Church, of Church Parents; as a man layeth claim to the Children born of his own Wife. *Thou haſt taken my children, and delivered them to paſs through the fire.* And *ver.* 20. he ſaith, *they were born to him.* To conclude, to be a Nation in Covenant with God,

God, 'tis by that means to become the people of God in a ſpecial ſenſe, both Parents and Children; and this we ſee is foretold of Gentile Nations.

To proceed. The Prophet *Hoſea* alſo foretelleth the Lords taking Gentile Nations into Covenant with him, and by conſequence making them Churches, as he took the Nation of the Jews and made them his People, *Hoſea* 2.23. *I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy, and I will ſay to them that were not my people, thou art my people, and they ſhall ſay, thou art my God.* Here is the ſubſtance of the Covenant which conſtituted the Nation of the Jews, Parents and Infants together to be the People and Church of God. The Apoſtle *Paul* expoundeth this place of the Gentiles, who by being taken into Covenant with God as *Iſrael* was, ſhall become his Churches and his people, in a ſpecial ſenſe, as *Iſrael* did.

Deut. 29. 13.

Rom. 9. 24, 25.

To conclude, that the Reader may have ſatisfaction heaped up and running over, I will now ſhew where the Prophet *Iſaiah* hath foretold two great Nations by name, that is, *Egypt* and *Aſſyria*, that they ſhould

ſhould become two Siſter-Churches with *Iſrael*, *Iſa*, 19. 24, 25. *In that day*, ſpeaking of Goſpel-times, *ſhall* Iſrael *be the third with* Egypt *and with* Aſſyria, *whom the Lord of hoſts ſhall bleſs*, ſaying, *Bleſſed be* Egypt *my people, and* Aſſyria *the work of my hands, and* Iſrael *my inheritance.*

Doctor Stillingfleet *quoteth this place to prove National Churches under the Goſpel.* Irenicum *p.* 157. *So do the* London *Miniſters,* Jus Divinum Miniſterii, *p.* 12.

Here theſe two Nations are ſaid to be two Siſters to *Iſrael*, and to be AS *Iſrael*. Firſt joined to the Lord AS *Iſrael* was, ſecondly Gods Inheritance AS *Iſrael* was; thirdly bleſſed of the Lord *as Iſrael* was, and fourthly, take the name of Gods people in a ſpecial ſenſe *as Iſrael* did, which they attain by being in Covenant with God, as I ſhewed before from *Ezekiel* 16. 8. The name of Gods people was the proper name of the National Church of the Jews, as appeareth by this, that when God unchurched them, it was under that name, *ye are not my people*; and when he Churches Gentiles in their room, he ſaith, *They ſhall become his people.* So that for a Nation to become the people of God, 'tis for that Nation to become the Church of God. 'Tis plain enough then, theſe three Prophets, *Iſaiah*, *Hoſea*, and *Zachary*, to mention no more of them, have very evi-

Hoſ. 2. 1.

Hoſ. 2. 23.

evidently, and with a loud voice foretold National Churches under the New Teſtament, comprehending Parents and Infants together, and that by the approbation of God. And therefore as of old the National Church of the Jews had Kings to nurſe it, ſo the ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* foretelleth the converſion of Kings to nurſe the National Churches of the Goſpel too, *Iſa.* 60. 3. *And the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing.* And in the 49 of *Iſaiah* 23. he foretelleth of Gentile Kings and Queens ſhould be nurſing Fathers and Mothers to the Church. To this purpoſe *Paul* the Apoſtle was ſent by Chriſts ſpecial appointment not only to the people of the Gentiles, but alſo to the Kings of the Gentiles, *Acts* 9. 13. meaning to convert them, that the National Churches of the Goſpel may have Princes to be Political heads to them, as the National Church of the Jews had.

Thus I have proved that the Prophets of the Old Teſtament, by the Inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, have propheſied the being of National Churches under the Goſpel by divine approbation. And this

this is my Second Argument to prove the National Church-way to be Gods way now under the New Teſtament as well as under the Old.

Mr. *Tombes* doth honeſtly confeſs that if there be ſuch a Covenant and Church-Covenant in being as there was *Deut.* 29. 10,11,12. and *Ezek.* 16. 20,21,22. of validity to beget an external filial Relation to God; it cannot then be denied but that the whole Nation, elder and younger, are in the Church. And he telleth Mr. *Cobbet* of *New England*, who acknowledgeth the firſt, yet diſowneth National Churches in a proper ſenſe: that he knew not how it ſhould make leſs than ſuch a National Church as was that of the Jews. *Antipedobapt. Part 3. p 298.*

Thirdly, As the Prophets in the Old Teſtament, ſo Chriſt Jeſus himſelf after them, when he was upon earth in perſon, foretelleth of National Churches under the Goſpel to ſucceed the Jewiſh Church in their choiceſt Church-priviledges, *Mat.* 21. 43. *The Kingdom of God*, ſaith he, *ſhall be taken from you and given to a Nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*

By

By the Kingdom of God, its being taken from the Jewiſh Nation and given to another, Doctor *Hammond* expoundeth it not only of the Goſpel, but the priviledge of being the only Church and People of God, which maketh good the Propheſie of *Moſes*, *Deut.* 32.21. *That for their ſins God would move them to jealouſie with thoſe which were not a people; and I will provoke them to anger*, ſaith God, *by a fooliſh NATION*; that is, he would take Nations of the Gentiles into Covenant with him, and thereby make them his People and Churches, as the Jewiſh *Nation* was, which would anger them; that when time was, were the only National Church and people of God, enjoying Church-honours. The Apoſtle *Paul* expoundeth theſe words of *Moſes*, of the converſion of Gentiles, *Rom.* 10.19.

But to return again to our Saviours words, he ſaith, *The Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you, and given to a NATION*, not particular Congregations in Nations only, much leſs to a few Congregations of grown perſons, leaving out their Infants. 'Tis plain that the *Promiſe* is as large as the *Threat*; what leſs then can the

the meaning be of our Saviour in thoſe words, but that *as* by the threatning, the *Nation* of the Jews would become unchurched, Parents and Children: So by the *Promiſe* whole *Nations* of Gentiles, though not all at a time, but by degrees, ſhould become Churched in their room. One *Nation* loſt it, others ſhould have it; even the ſame Kingdom ſtill for ſubſtance: even ſo ſaith our Saviour, *The Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from one, and given to another.* To this purpoſe therefore, and in purſuance of all the Prophefies of the Prophets, as well as Chriſts own prediction, by the authority received from his Father, he commandeth his Diſciples to go into all the world and to Diſciple and Baptize *ALL NATIONS*, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20.

Conſidering then of what uſe Baptiſm is, by the Ordinance of God, namely, to initiate perſons into the Chriſtian Church, as almoſt all knowledge. It followeth plainly, that Chriſts mind and the Apoſtles Commiſſion was to make whole Nations by degrees Church-members, Parents and Children, as the Jewiſh Nation was, and by conſequence to make them

them National Churches as the Jewish Nation was: As therefore the National Church of the Jews comprehended Parents and Children together: So the Prophet *Isaiah* foretelleth the same of the National Churches of the New Testament. The Prophet speaking of the conversion of the Gentiles, saith, *Before they call I will answer, and whilest they are yet speaking I will hear.* This place the Apostle *Paul* expoundeth of the Conversion of the Gentiles, *Rom.*10.20. and bringing them into the Church.

*Isa.*65.13.

Now mark, the Prophet saith, not only of the Parents, they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, but of their Children too: they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their off spring with them. As it is used to be with the Proselytes of the National Church of the Jews, who came along with their Parents into the Church.

Again, somewhat more plainly. In the 49. of *Isaiah ver.*22. *Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy Sons in their arms or bosoms, and thy Daughters*

shall

ſhall be carried upon their ſhoulders. But to put it out of all doubt, that Infants take their place in the viſible Church Chriſtian, as well as Jewiſh. Jeſus Chriſt having ſaid, *The Kingdom of God ſhould be taken from the Jews and given to another Nation*, he affirmeth particularly of Church-Infants, *That of ſuch is the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven, and therefore bid his Diſciples to let them come to him, and he bleſſed them*, *Mark* 10. 16. which is a Church-priviledge proper to Church-members, *Num.*6. 22,23,27. as hath been well obſerved by Mr. *Blake*: and *Mat.* 18. 5. ſaith our Saviour, *Whoſo receiveth ſuch little children in his name, receiveth him.* All which put together, doth abundantly confirm their membership in the viſible Chriſtian Church: So that the National Churches of the New Teſtament are compoſed of the ſame matter, and the Kingdom of God under the New Teſtament hath by Divine Right the ſame Subjects that it had of old in the National Church of the Jews.

Fourthly, If we find a Chriſtian Synod in the New Teſtament governing particular Congregations by the approba-

tion of the holy Ghoſt, as well as of old the Jewiſh Synod governed the Jewiſh Congregations: then for certain the Independent Church-way of particular Churches is none of Gods way: But we plainly find a Chriſtian Synod in the New Teſtament, even in the Apoſtles time, governing particular Congregations; and ſecondly, we find divers particular Churches freely ſubmitting thereto without objection, and ſo by practice to diſclaim any ſuch thing as Independency: neither did we ever hear of one Church that did otherwiſe. Therefore the Independent Church-way is none of Gods way, but a meer humane invention.

Firſt, a Chriſtian Synod is viſible in the New Teſtament. The Synod conſiſted of the Apoſtles and Elders, *Acts* 15. ordinary brethren perhaps were preſent. The occaſion was this, certain perſons came from *Jeruſalem* to *Antioch*, and taught the people the neceſſity of continuing Circumciſion, *Acts* 15.1. This begot doubts in the weak minds of many. The Church at *Antioch* deſire *Paul* and *Barnabas* to go up to *Jeruſalem* to the Apoſtles and Elders,

to

to debate and conclude the Queſtion, *Acts* 15. 2. Secondly, accordingly the Apoſtles and Elders came together to conſider of this matter, *ver.* 6. And thirdly, after much diſputing *pro* and *con*, that is, of the Apoſtles and Elders, they at length conclude what ſhould be done, and what not. And fourthly, the Apoſtles and Elders Synodically make decrees upon it for all particular Churches to obſerve, *Acts* 15. 28, 29. They are not ſaid to give advice only as Chriſtian friends and brethren, but to *make Laws* as *Governours*; for they make *decrees* and lay burthens, words that plainly denote Power and Authority over the particular Congregations. But then ſecondly, as we find this Synod exerciſing their Eccleſiaſtical Authority, ſo we find as plainly the particular Churches ſubmitted to it. For when the decrees of the Synod came to be delivered to the particular Churches, not only the Church of *Jeruſalem* and *Antioch*, but all the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia* received them with joy, *Acts* 15. 31.

Here then are theſe three things plain; firſt, a governing Church-power in being

under the New Teſtament as well as under the Old. Secondly, this governing Church-power, exerciſing their power by the approbation of the holy Ghoſt, for when they made their decrees, they ſay, It ſeemed good not only to them but the holy Ghoſt. Thirdly, we find the particular Congregations, one and all, ſubmitting to their Government: So that Independency of particular worſhipping Congregations, was not thought of in thoſe days. If the particular Churches had believed, as the Independents now give out, That by Chriſts appointment every particular Congregation ſhould ſtand Independent, no doubt they would have pleaded it againſt the decrees of the Synod, they would indeed have ſaid we ought to ask counſel of Siſter Churches, but to accept no decrees from any Church-power under heaven. For by divine appointment every particular Church is to ſtand Independent, but we hear not the leaſt whiſper of any ſuch word from any of them. We may therefore ſafely conclude, that Independency is not only without and beſides the word, but quite contrary to the word, which Diſſenters profeſs to be ruled

ſed by. They ſay the beſt patterns and examples under heaven are but ſeducers in what they fall ſhort of, or beſides the word of God; which if true, Independency is condemned for a ſeducer by a great promoter of it, becauſe we ſee the pattern of Dependency plain, but not Independency.

If any object, that this Synod is no pattern to us, becauſe the Apoſtles were in it, which they are not now.

Anſ. Though Synods now have not the Apoſtles with them in their perſons, they have the Apoſtles in their writings, which contain the rule of Chriſt, both for faith, ſubſtance of worſhip and converſation.

Secondly, Though the Apoſtles were there, *they did not ſit as Apoſtles extraordinarily inſpired, as when they dictated the Scripture, but as ordinary Elders with other men.* For when the Apoſtles and Elders met at *Jeruſalem* to conſider the matter, the decrees are ſaid to be made, not by the Apoſtles alone, but by the Apoſtles and Elders, *Act.* 16. 4. When the Apoſtles

dictated the Scripture, they both ſpake and wrote by extraordinary Revelation from the Lord, not by ordinary conſultations with men. But now the decrees and commandments of this Synod were the effects of many humane debates *pro* and *con*, both of Apoſtles and Elders, from Scripture and Reaſon. And when there had been much diſputing, ſaith the Text, *Acts* 15.7. Then, *&c.* Therefore the decrees go out in the name of the Elders as well as Apoſtles.

Thirdly, If it had been the mind of God, that the controverſie at *Antioch* ſhould have been determined by extraordinary Revelation, in all reaſon *Paul* the Apoſtle who was preſent upon the place, would have been moved by the ſpirit of God ſo to have determined it. He would not have needed a Commiſſion from the Church at *Antioch* to conſider of the matter with other men at *Jeruſalem*, he need only have ſaid in this caſe as he did to the Church at *Corinth* in another caſe, *That which I received of the Lord, deliver I unto you*; and in another place, *If any man think himſelf a Prophet, and ſpiritual, let him acknowledge that the things*

1 Cor. 11. 23.
1 Cor. 14.

things that I write unto you are the Commandments of the Lord, and there had been an end of the controverſie.

Obj. But the Text ſaith, *it ſeemed good to the holy Ghoſt to make theſe decrees.*

Anſwer 1. 'Tis true. But withall 'tis ſaid, *it ſeemed good to US*, that is, the Apoſtles and Elders, as well as the holy Ghoſt: ſo that the preſence of the ſpirit in this Synod, was not for extraordinary Revelation, but ordinary aid and aſſiſtance, helping them to argue well, and draw natural concluſions from premiſes; ſuch a preſence as all lawful Synods met in the name and fear of God, reſolving to govern by the word of God, may reaſonably expect from the general promiſe of Chriſt, *Mat.* 28. *to be with his Miniſters and Churches to the end of the world.*

Secondly, A Chriſtian Synod of lawful Paſtors have not only the Light of Nature, but the Light of Scripture to guide them, which were inſpired by the holy Ghoſt, ſo that ſo long as they err not from that rule, they may ſafely now ſay, *It ſeemeth good to the holy Ghoſt and to us.*

Thirdly, Though it be possible for Synods to err, what reason can be given why a lawful Synod now may not expect as much of the presence of God as the Jewish Synod had. And though God did not think good to grant that Synod the spirit of Infallibility, yet it was his pleasure that a *National* Church should be governed by a Synod, and the people are commanded to obey them.

Fourthly, The Argument from the possibility of a Synods erring, to the having of none: but every particular Congregation to govern themselves, lyeth as well against all Government both in Families, Cities, Armies, *Navies*, *Nations*. The King and Parliament are no more Infallible in making Acts of Parliament, than *Synods* in making their *Canons*; yet there is no body *so mad* as to say, because they may err, 'tis better to have none.

If the great ends of all Church-constitutions be best served in the *National* Church-way, or frustrate, or in danger to be frustrate in the Independent Church-way: then the *National* Church-way is Gods way now under the New Testament as well as under the Old; and the Independent

pendent Church-way is none of Gods way. For 'tis certain, God would not ordain a means that ſhould not promote the end, but deſtroy it. And in the Church God commandeth all things to be done for edification. 1 Cor. 14. 40.

But the ends of all Church-conſtitutions are beſt ſerved in the National Church-way, where Nations are converted, and threatned to be ruined in the Independent Church-way: Therefore the National Church-way is Gods way *Now* as much as ever it was; and the Independent Church-way is none of Gods way.

Here I will firſt ſet down the great ends of all Church-conſtitutions, and then ſecondly, ſhew how they are beſt ſerved in the National Church-way, and how they are in danger to be fruſtrate in the Independent Church-way.

The great ends of all Church-conſtitutions, I refer to four heads.

Firſt, The preſervation of the Faith and Worſhip of Chriſt *pure* from corruption.

Secondly, The ſafety and edification of all the members of Chriſt within the Church.

Third-

Thirdly, The propagation of the Faith and Worship of Christ to those that are *without* the Church.

Fourthly, The transmission of the Faith and Worship of Christ to the posterity of the Church.

Now I say, that these ends are all best provided for in the National Church-way, and threatned to be frustrate in the Independent Church-way, is the thing I am in the next place to prove.

But before I proceed to my Arguments, I would premise two things.

First, That in a great National Church where there are many thousand particular Congregations, it cannot but be expected, but by the failure of Instruments in the Government of doing their duty; and especially in the case of civil distractions in the Nation, there will be many things amiss.

Secondly, I would not be thought to insinuate, that in the frame and state of our own National Church of *England*, and the exercise of the Government and Discipline nothing may be mended. King *Charles* the First of blessed Memory, in his excellent Book, doth allow that the Indulgence of times, and corruption of manners,

P. 171. 173.

ners, had made work for Reformation, which he telleth us would eaſily have followed moderate counſels. The learned Lord *Bacon*, ſpeaking of the Church of *England*, telleth the King, that the Church is not now to plant or build, but only to be pruned from corruptions, and repaired; and propoundeth the particulars that in his judgment called for Reformation then. And it cannot be but our Civil and Eccleſiaſtical diſſenſions ſince, have made our caſe worſe.

But my Arguments reſpect the National Church-way in ſimple conſideration uncloathed of the unhappy circumſtances that any one particular National Church may become too by unhappy accidents.

Having firſt entred theſe cautions, I now proceed. I have ſaid that the firſt great end of all Church-conſtitutions is to preſerve the Doctrine and Worſhip of Chriſt *pure* from corruption.

Scripture telleth us that in the laſt times ſome ſhall depart from the faith. Others are ſaid to make ſhipwrack of their faith. St. *Paul* ſaith of the viſible Church, it is the pillar and ground of truth, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. And particularly that one part of the

Paſtors

Paſtors office is to contend for the faith, and ſtop the mouth of all gainſayers of it, and to wreſt the truth out of the hands of Hereticks and deceivers.

To this purpoſe, in the National Church-way, Governours take care,

Firſt, To provide Schools of Learning to feed the Church with men of improved Intellectuals, that may be fit for the work, and hath her rewards ready for the encouragement of them that improve in learning and diligence; hence the Church of *England*, ſince the Reformation, hath never wanted Champions to contend for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, againſt all ſorts of adverſaries.

Secondly, Governours take care that all neceſſary points of faith be collected out of the holy Scriptures by the moſt Learned and Judicious men, and put into certain Articles, and printed for every ones benefit.

Thirdly, No man by Law can obtain a publick ſtanding in the Church, as a Preacher of Chriſts doctrine, whoſe faith is not examined by Orthodox and learned men, and who ſubſcribe not to the Articles of Faith agreed on by the Church, and whoſe abilities alſo for the work of

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the Miniſtry, are not firſt tried and approved by men able to judge of them, and that is not ordained and ſet apart for the work; and if in time any lawfully ordained Miniſters happen to fall into very groſs errors, and broach them contrary to the form of wholſome words, Then

Fourthly, There is the governing Church-power, ready to call them to an account, and admoniſh them, and if they do not repent and reform, then to ſuſpend their proceedings in doing hurt to others.

But now in the Independent Church-way there is, firſt, like to be little encouragement for learning or learned men, becauſe of a conceit that in orderly Churches there ſhall be ſuch a notable effuſion of the Spirit, that men may preach by *gift*, without humane learning; and, ſecondly, from a miſtake of the true ſenſe of divers Scriptures, *Col.* 2. 8. *Beware leſt ye be ſpoiled through Philoſophy*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. Ye ſee your calling, Brethren, *Not many wiſe*: hence abundance in the Independent Church-way are againſt humane learning, as an enemy rather than a friend to Religion. One of them in the late times writeth a Book againſt it, with a Teſti- Dell 1653.

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mony as he calleth it against Divinity degrees in the University. I say abundance are of the same mind (but not all) and therefore would have had the Colledge Lands sold. They are generally against Tithes, as Jewish, though the Triers at *Whitehall* were not, and the most part against all *set* maintenance for Ministers. One writeth a Book and calleth it, *Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church*, meaning all the Ministers that had certain stipends. Lastly, others of them are against the very Order and Office of the Ministry. Of these the *London* Ministers lamentably complained, 1654. in these words, *There are a generation of men risen up amongst us, that say 'tis the greatest cheat that ever was put upon Christians, to make them believe that there is a distinct Office of the Ministry peculiar to some men and not to others.* This they call a Monopolizing of the Ministry, and the worst of all Monopolies: The consequence whereof was, and in reason could be no other than the corruption of the Faith by the prevailing of all sorts of errors. Here let the godly Reader take notice by the by how our fierce opposition of the Bishops at last issued it self in the overthrow of the Reputation

Milton.

Jus Divinum Ministerii. *Preface.*

of

of the very Order and Office of the Miniſtry it ſelf, which the firſt Non-conformiſts little dreamt of.

Secondly, The Paſtors of Independent Congregations (neceſſarily by their principles) paſs no ſcrutiny of Learned men able to judge of their fitneſs. They have no call but from the particular people they ſerve, who being generally illiterate men, are not in reaſon able either to judge of their faith or fitneſs, and if they run into groſs errors and carry the people with them, as many times it falleth out; the blind lead the blind and both fall into the ditch, for there is no governing Church-power above them to correct them.

Thirdly, To preſerve the Faith pure, the governing Church-power in National Churches ſtoppeth the Printing Preſs againſt all heretical Books, but the ſpirit of Independency openeth the Preſs to all ſorts of Hereticks and Impoſtors, to the corrupting of the Faith of thouſands in *England*; inſomuch that Mr. *Pool* telleth the People, *That in the Biſhops days* (that was during the time of their being in Government) *errors walkt in the dark, but now*, (ſaith he, that was ſince the Reign of In-

Pool *in his Book of the Deity of the holy Ghoſt.*

Independency) *errors walkt in the light*, cum Privilegio, *for the more speedy corrupting of the people.* Mr. *Case* and sixty and odd Ministers of the City of *London* make the same complaint in a solemn Declaration to the people 1660. telling them that the truths of the Gospel were in danger to be buried in the rubbish of all sorts of errors.

See stop to the Course of Separation.

Fourthly and lastly, To preserve the Faith pure, the governing Church-power of the National Churches, suffereth no publick Disputations with Adversaries before the common people ordinarily, and if ever they suffer any, they first approve the Disputant. But in the loose way of Independency, any weak self-conceited illiterate person may undertake the most learned man that is, when and as often as he pleaseth; the mischievous consequences whereof, for the spreading of errors, this Nation soon experienced after the overthrow of the Government.

In 1659. as I remember it was, an illiterate Anabaptist undertook to dispute publickly with a very learned *Socinian*, he was quickly baffled, being no more fit to dispute with his Adversary, than a child to fight with a Giant.

Now

Now let the Reader judge whether the National Church-way be not the ſafeſt way for the preſervation of the Faith *pure* from corruption: And whether the Independent Church-way be not the way to overthrow the Faith.

Now for the preſervation of the WORSHIP of Chriſt *pure* from corruption; let us compare the two ways.

In the National Church-way, particularly of *England*, the governing Church taketh care, that beſides the prayer of every particular Miniſter in the Pulpit, wherein by ſome or other in a great Nation as *England* is, it will be eaſily conceived there will be found many defects and many errors. Governours therefore in great charity, piety and prudence, compoſe all neceſſary Prayers and Thankſgivings in certain ſet Forms, eaſie for the common people, both to underſtand and remember, and ſo for the Sacraments. That ſo whatever the Miniſterial infirmities of particular Paſtors are, the particular Churches ſhall not want the pure worſhip of God by Prayers and Praiſes, both for matter and

essential form, free from the passions, prejudices, errors and mistakes of particular Ministers.

As for set Forms of Prayer, and Ecclesiastical Rites, saith *Calvin*, I very much approve, that it be set or certain, from which it may not be lawful for the Pastors in their Function to depart; that so there may be provision made for the simplicity and unskilfulness of some: and that the consent of all the Churches among themselves may more certainly appear. And lastly also, that the extravagant levity of some who affect novelties may be prevented. This is the way of the National Church of *England*.

But now in the Independent Church-way there is no such care taken, there is no set Forms of Prayer and Praises digested by the wisdom and charity of Governours for the guidance and government of Individual Pastors. No, they cry out against set Forms of Prayer as unlawful, forbidden by the second Commandment, and write Book after Book against them. But all the Prayers of such Churches are nothing but the suddain *Ex tempore* conceptions of particular

Mr. Cotton.

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lar Miniſters, which conſidering their weak gifts, moſt being illiterate men, and the multitudes of the diviſions and ſubdiviſions of the ſeveral parties upon differing opinions that are in that way, 'tis impoſſible but the publick worſhip of God by Prayers and Praiſes muſt needs be moſt miſerably depraved and corrupted, for that all experience proveth that the errors and private animoſities of men run into their prayers.

I have given notice in my *Stop to the courſe of Separation*, of divers parties, during our late confuſions, who thought it their duty to be often praying one againſt another, and living in perpetual ſtrife; their thankſgivings to God were ſtill as they got the upper hand one of another.

Now let it be conſidered, firſt, whether theſe contradictory Prayers of divided parties did not horribly deprave the worſhip of God; and ſecondly, whether it had not been happy for the Churches at that time, that they had had ſome ſet Forms of Prayer for the publick Congregations, compoſed by ſober minds, free from the heats and errors of the dividing parties. Herein I appeal to the very

conſcience of every honeſt upright hearted man, that by being lockt into parties, hath not loſt the free uſe of his intellectual faculties: And then thirdly, whether the National Church-way be not the only ſafe way to ſecure the publick worſhip of God. And on the other hand, whether the Independent Church-way be not the way to overthrow it.

Doctor *Hammond* in 1645. in an Epiſtle to his *View of the Directory*, lamenteth the caſting off the Liturgy out of the Pariſh Churches, as the direct way to Atheiſm and Prophaneneſs, and he ſaith that a Liturgy hath been found by the experience of all antient times, as a neceſſary hedge and mound to preſerve the profeſſion of Religion and worſhip of God. Independency then that pulleth this hedge and mound down to the ground, is not the way to preſerve but to deſtroy the worſhip of God.

I now proceed to the ſecond great end of all Church-conſtitutions, the ſafety and edification of all the members of Chriſt within the Church. And we ſhall find the National Church-way the only ſafe way to preſerve and edifie the Church:

and

and the Independent Church-way the way to deſtroy all.

Let us conſider,

Firſt, In the National Church-way all the Baptized profeſſors of ſaving Faith, with their children throughout the Nation, being united into one body, with governours over the whole, no part can want the ſuccours that the whole is able to afford, if inſtruments do their duty; neither can any part hurt the whole without controul.

Secondly, That the whole may come under Church care and watch, the whole is put into parts, under particular Paſtors, as the General of an Army putteth his Souldiers under particular Captains.

Thirdly, Care is taken to erect publick Temples for each part to meet at, for the publick worſhip of God.

Fourthly, That the Paſtors have ſet maintenance fixt by Law, that their livelyhood may not depend upon the people; thus 'tis in *England*.

Fifthly, Care is taken to try the gifts of every man that is truſted with the cure of ſouls.

Sixthly, Care is taken to bind Paſtors and People to do their duty one to another, and to puniſh them that do not walk orderly.

Seventhly, Care is taken alſo to encourage all Schools of Literature, to feed the particular parts with men able to feed, govern and protect them.

But now in the Independent Church-way, inſtead of taking care for the whole body of Baptized Profeſſors in the Nation, through their groſs errors touching the qualification of Goſpel Church-members, inſtead of caring for them, as Chriſtian Brethren, they Paganize nineteen parts of the Nation in twenty, and diſown their Church-membership.

Doctor *Owen* and all that follow him deny Church-membership to all whom they do not think Regenerate, notwithſtanding their Profeſſion and Baptiſm, and by this means Chriſtianity is not allowed to one of a thouſand in the National Church of *England*, to whom according to Scripture it doth belong.

When the Triers in *Cromwells* days ſent out Miniſters to Preach the Goſpel to the Country Congregations, they were not to own the Pariſhes for Churches of Chriſt, there-

therefore never administred the Sacraments to them, they only preacht to them as they would do to Heathens, to make them matter for Churches.

But secondly, suppose they did own all the Baptized Professors of the Church of *England* for Church members, till they exclude themselves, or are legally excluded, yet their very error of Independency put in practice, would overthrow, or at least sorely threaten the ruine of the whole; yea though the particular Congregations consisted of such qualified persons as they fancy: because without the union of the parts into one body, and without order and Government over the whole, 'tis impossible there should be strength or safety in the whole, any more in the Church than in a Nation or an Army. What condition were all the Families of *England* in, if every Family stood Independent? 'Tis most certain, plurality not united together with the bond of union, must come to division, and from division to contention, and from contention to confusion, as I have already hinted.

See stop to the Course of Separation p. 62.

Obj. If it be said, why but in the particular Churches, there is order among themselves?

Anſ. What laſting good order can there be, where the Government is popular, as it is in Independent Churches: perhaps in ſome few Churches where the Paſtor is eminent for Gifts, and intereſt in the people, and the people of a finer education, the madneſs of popular Government doth not ſo quickly appear: But in ordinary caſes the evil of popular Government quickly ſheweth it ſelf in moſt fearful diſorders, and this both Reaſon and Experience ſpeaketh too.

Secondly, Suppoſe there ſhould be found order in ſome of the parts among themſelves; why yet alaſs the particular parts ſtanding Independent, they are but ſo many multiplied ſingularities; ſo that particulars muſt needs be in danger of deſtruction by the fierce on-ſet of Adverſaries. There is nothing of a whole among them, and therefore can be no ſtrength among them.

Thirdly, Certainly two is better than one, and the more one the two are, the ſafer for them both. As in a Building, all the materials being joined into one houſe, every lower ſtone ſupporteth the higher from falling to the ground, and every higher ſtone ſaveth the lower from

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taking wet. Two houſes ſtanding Independent one by another, cannot in reaſon be thought ſo ſafe, as if joined together in their walls and roofs. How then cometh it to be thought otherwiſe with the Church.

The caſe is plain; 'Tis the joining all the Congregations into one body, with Governours over the whole, that is for ſafety and edification of the whole, becauſe that rendreth all the parts capable of the ſuccouring influences of the whole, both of gifts, graces, government and protection; whereas Independency doth not only deprive particular Churches of the publick gifts, graces, government and protection, but in the very nature of it, quencheth ſympathy with others, and by degrees charity, which is the bond of perfectneſs.

Hence the Brotherhood, which St. *Peter* commandeth to love, belonging to the Catholick Church, the Independents arrogate to their own particular Sect, and give the name only to one another. And the Paſtors reckon themſelves Paſtors to no Church but their own particular Churches, whereby they utterly overthrow the Communion of Saints, the

Eſſence

Essence and Unity of the Church; wherein lyeth the excellency and strength of it.

Fourthly, In the Independent Church-way, instead of putting the whole into parts, for the orderly disposing the whole, the whole are left loose, and every individual person chuseth who they please for Pastor, and own no other in that Relation, though they live at twenty miles distance.

Instead of having a worthy Pastor for them

Fifthly, Instead of their Pastors being approved by learned men, able to judge of their fitness, the people chuse who they please, and many times chuse a Wolf instead of a true Shepherd.

Sixthly, Whereas in the National Church-way, the maintenance of the Ministers is fixt by Law, to avoid all temptations of sinful pleasing the people. In the Independent Church-way the Ministers maintenance is wholly precarious.

Seventhly, Instead of Universities to feed the Church with learned men that may be fit Pastors. Abundance in the Independent way cry down Universities and humane learning as an enemy to Religion. I conclude then that for the

safety

ſafety and edification of the vaſt multitude of Chriſtian Profeſſors in Nations; the National Church-way is the only ſafe way to preſerve and edifie them, and the Independent Church-way the way to deſtroy them.

I now proceed to the third great end of Church conſtitutions, which I ſaid was to propagate the Faith to thoſe that are without the Church. And I affirm that the National Church-way is the only way to promote this ſervice alſo, and therefore Gods way. The Independent Church-way the way to overthrow all, and therefore none of Gods way.

To bring over Jews, Pagans and Turks to the true Religion profeſſed in a Nation, four things are highly requiſite in the Profeſſors of it.

Firſt, Unity of Faith in all ſubſtantial Articles at leaſt.

Secondly, Uniformity in Worſhip as much as well may be.

Thirdly, Unity in heart and affections one to another.

Fourthly, Holineſs of life above all that can be found in the profeſſors of other Religions.

By

By unity of Faith, ſteady notices are given what Chriſt would have his Diſciples to believe.

By uniformity in worſhip, the conſent of the whole certainly appeareth.

By unity in heart, or love one to another, Chriſt ſaith *All men ſhall know they are his Diſciples, and that God ſent him into the world.*

By admirable holineſs of life, men bear Chriſts Image, which is the Image of God, and render him fit to be *believed*, *beloved* and *obeyed*.

Now that which I ſay is this, That the National Church-way is the beſt way to promote theſe four things in the profeſſors of Chriſtian Religion, and therefore Gods way to propagate the Faith to thoſe without the Church; and the Independent Church-way the way to deſtroy them all, and therefore none of Gods way to propagate the Faith.

Firſt, The National Church having her form of wholſom words, and agreed Articles of neceſſary points of Faith, collected from the Scriptures; and the publick Miniſters being all tried and approved by learned men.

Secondly,

Secondly, All ſubſcribing thoſe Articles, and living under Government, each Miniſter holding his place upon his good behaviour, it is reaſonable to expect a ſufficient degree both of unity in point of Faith, and uniformity in Worſhip among all the Miniſters and Churches, which the Apoſtle *Paul* ſo earneſtly deſireth in the Churches. I ſay a ſufficient degree, ſuch an accord as that no one ſhall ſo diſſent as to break the publick peace by running into parties.

Thirdly, To promote Charity, the whole of Baptized Profeſſors are owned for Chriſtian Brethren, and have the Church reſpects of Brethren vouchſafed them, (except any be convicted of notorious ſcandal) which nouriſheth Charity in the whole.

Fourthly, For piety the whole being united into one body, being compact, become capable of the gifts and graces which every joint ſupplieth for the edifying of the whole, which the Apoſtle reckoneth the way to increaſe in grace, *Epheſ.* 4.

But now in the Independent Church-way, Charity is gone by denying Chriſtian Brotherhood, Church-care, watch, and Sacra-

Sacramental Communion to all Chriſtians but the men of their own party. Now where Charity is dead, Piety cannot live in power, 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2. The miſcarriages of ſo many eminent men, taken notice of by many that have broke the unity of the Church of *England* by Schiſm, and run into the uncharitable ways of ſeparation, will never be forgotten by ſome men that have taken more particular notice than others.

Then laſtly, In the Independent Church-way, there being no publick eſtabliſhment relating either to Faith or Worſhip, every particular Miniſter hath power to Preach what they will for Faith, and practice how they will for Worſhip, there muſt needs be ſtrange inconſiſtencies both in point of Faith and Worſhip, and conſtantly ſwarming into new Sects. So that it is impoſſible a Diſciple of another Religion ſhould have any ſteddy notice of the Chriſtian Faith and Worſhip from them.

The Independent Church-way therefore is none of Gods way to propagate the Chriſtian Religion, but to make it contemptible.

I conclude this with a ſaying of the moſt

moſt learned Lord *Bacon*, in his Eſſays of Unity in Religion, *pag.* 11. *It is certain*, ſaith he, *that Hereſies and Schiſms are of all others the greateſt ſcandals, yea more than corruption of manners. For as in the Natural body, a wound or ſolution of continuity is worſe than a corrupt humour; ſo it is in the ſpiritual body, ſo that nothing doth ſo much keep men out of the Church, and drive men out of the Church, as the breach of unity.* Again, *the Doctor of the Gentiles, the propriety of whoſe vocation drew him to have a ſpecial care of thoſe without*, ſaith, *If an Heathen come in and hear you ſpeak with ſeveral tongues, will he not ſay you are mad: And certainly it is little better when Atheiſts and Prophane perſons do hear of ſo many diſcordant and contrary opinions in Religion, it doth avert them from the Church, and make them ſit down in the chair of ſcorners. There is a Maſter of ſcoffing*, ſaith he, *that in his Catalogue of Books of a fained Library, ſetteth down this Title of a Book*, The morris-dance of Hereticks: *For indeed every Sect of them hath a diverſe poſture or cringe by themſelves, which cannot but move deriſion in worldlings, and depraved Politicians, who are apt to contemn holy things.* The truth of this we have found by experience in *England*, from the beginning of

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the reign of Independency; but not one of a hundred taketh any great notice of it, much leſs layeth it to heart.

Fourthly and laſtly, For tranſmitting the Chriſtian Faith and Religion to the poſterity of the Church, which I ſaid was the fourth great end of all Church-conſtitutions. The National Church-way is the only ſure way for this alſo, and the Independent Church-way the way to cut off the conveyance to poſterity.

In the National Church-way Governours order all Infants born within the Church to be Baptized, as the Infants of the National Church of the Jews were both Circumciſed and Baptized, and by this means dedicate them to God, and enroll them among the people of God, and members of the Church: and alſo bind them to profeſs the Chriſtian Religion, as ſoon as capable, and to accept Chriſt Jeſus for their Lord and Maſter, and to wear his yoke. And laſtly, command they be taught, when capable, either by their own Parents or Sureties, the Principles of Chriſtian Religion. By this means care is taken to nurſe up ſtill ſucceſſively new Generations of

Subjects

Subjects to Christ from one Generation to another.

But in the Independent Church-way, the great Ordinance of the Gospel water-Baptism, which Christ ordained to be the badg of his Disciples, and to distinguish them from *Moses* his Disciples; and whereby persons are said to put on Christ, and to be put into a Covenant-Relation to him, by degrees loseth its reputation, with many in that way, the members have got above it, and at last above all other Ordinances, as too carnal for them, and slight obliging their children to God by such a carnal Ceremony.

Secondly, Others in the Independent Church-way hold the reputation of Baptism, but despise Infant-Baptism as none of Christs Ordinance, because Infants cannot personally profess Faith, which suppose indispensably necessary to Baptism by Christs institution, whereby they unchurch all Christendom, and leave their own Posterity uningaged to God by Baptism.

One had the impudence to write a Book against Infant-Baptism, and to call it *Christendom unchristned*, for 150 pages together, but he lost his own Christianity upon Samuel Fisher.

upon it, being by a ſevere hand of God hurled into the dungeon of Quakeriſm, wherein he died.

'Tis thought by ſome that ſince the reign of Independency, many hundred children born of Chriſtian Parents in *England*, have lived a conſiderable time and died without Baptiſm, or any viſible mark of difference between them and heathens children.

Thirdly, Others in great numbers repeat Baptiſm at Age, upon perſons that have been Baptized in Infancy, and when they have done forſake the Communion of the Catholick Church, into which their Infant-Baptiſm admitted them, as the Communion of unbaptized perſons, and betake themſelves to their own party; by which deſperate act they become led out of the Communion of the Catholick Church, and let into a Sect which is the ready road to infidelity, as Reaſon and Experience both teach us.

Take notice that many of the judicious Miniſters of *New England* finding by experience how their Independent notions and practices relating to the Church, had ſo ſtraitned Baptiſm, that abundance of

Chri-

Chriſtians children born in the Church, remained unbaptized, and ſo like to remain; they obtained a Synod in 1662. to enlarge Baptiſm to the children of Chriſtians, whoſe immediate Parents had not ſubmitted to their New Church Government, which was that which kept their children from Baptiſm.

Mr. *Davenport* and twelve more, or thereabout, oppoſe it, and one writeth againſt it, one Mr. *Bayly*, as I have heard his name was, a very good Scholar, and a wiſe good man, much laid to heart the not Baptizing the Poſterity of profeſſed Chriſtians; and it was upon this ground that the neglect of Infant-Baptiſm was the direct road to Irreligion and Apoſtacy, inſtead of Reformation.

He writ a Book 1664. to anſwer Mr. *Davenport* in defence of the Synod, which it ſeemeth had determined to enlarge Baptiſm: And in *pag.* 44. he hath theſe words, *Scripture telleth us*, ſaith he, *that to deny the Children of the Church to have any part in the Lord, hath a ſtrong tendency in it to make them ceaſe from fearing the Lord, or to harden their hearts from his fear.* For this he urgeth the 22. of *Joſhuah* 24, 25. verſes,

In time to come your Children might ſpeak to our Children, that was the Children of Reuben, *what have you to do with the Lord God of* Iſrael, *ver.* 25. *you have no part in the Lord: ſo ſhall your Children make our Children ceaſe from fearing the Lord.*

To deny they belonged to God, was the way to make them neglect God; ſo to deny Baptiſm to children of the Church, is in the judgment of this worthy man, in effect to deny they have any part in the Lord, and by conſequence to make them careleſs of God and Religion.

On the contrary, he ſaith, *to own they have part in the Lord, and therefore to put Chriſts livery upon them, and to mark them with the mark of Gods people, is the way to ſoften and break the heart, and draw it home to God.* Hence the Lord when he would powerfully draw and win the Church of the Jews to faith and obedience, the Lord often beginneth with this, *That he is their God*, viz. in outward Covenant, *and they his people, Pſal.* 81. 8. *Levit.* 19. 3, 4. *Deut.* 14. 1, 2. *Hoſ.* 14. 1. In which places and many more, 'tis plain when God would perſwade to duty and dehort from ſin, he putteth the Church in mind of their being

being in Covenant with him, and he with them.

Further, ſaith this worthy man, *the experience of many can witneſs to this, of what uſe the conſideration of the Lords preventing grace in his ſealed Covenant, and their engagement to him thereby hath been in the day of their turning unto God.* He proceedeth *pag.* 45. and let Mr. *Dauvers* and Mr. *Kiffin*, and all honeſt upright men conſider what he ſaith, *The way of Anabaptiſts*, viz. *to admit none to Church-membership and Baptiſm but adult profeſſors, is the ſtraighteſt way, and one would think ſhould be a way of great purity, but experience hath abundantly ſhewed the contrary, that it hath been an inlet to great corruption and looſeneſs both in doctrine and practice, and a troubleſome dangerous underminer of Reformation.*

He concludeth, *If we do not keep in the way of a converting grace giving Covenant, and keep perſons under thoſe Church-diſpenſations wherein grace is given, the Church will dye of a lingring, though not of a violent death.* He might as well have ſaid, *If we do not throw up our new Independent principles, whereby we narrow the Church almoſt to nothing, and keep the Children of the Church from their Birth-right, and return to the very*

Independency will cauſe the Church to dye of a lingring death.

principles which we ignorantly forſook, but with a good meaning, we ſhall ruine the Church.

Once again, *The Lord hath not ſet up Churches that a few old Chriſtians may keep one another warm whileſt they live, and then carry away the Church into the cold grave when they dye.* This is a true character of the Independent Church-way, given of it by a good man after great experience.

No, but that they might with all the care, and with all the obligations, and all the advantages to that care that may be, nurſe up ſtill ſucceſſively another generation of ſubjects to Chriſt, that may ſtand up in his Kingdom when they are gone, and ſo from one generation to another.

This is the way of the National Church of *England*, it taketh care to keep the poſterity of the Church in a Covenant Relation to God, and under thoſe Church-diſpenſations wherein grace is given. I therefore conclude, not only by my own reaſon, but according to the reaſon of this pious and learned man, taught by experience, that the National Church-way is the only way to tranſmit the true Religion to the poſterity of the Church, and that the Independent Church-way is the

way

way to cut off the conveyance of it to posterity.

I have now done with the proof of my first proposition against Independency, which was this, That the National Church-way agreeth to Scripture and Reason, and therefore is Gods way; the Independent Church-way agreeth to neither, and therefore is none of Gods way. I have proved it thus.

First, The Jewish Church by Gods Institution was National not Congregational, and he hath no where repealed that way. And the reasons for continuing it so are the same.

Secondly, The Prophets of the Old Testament, by the Inspiration of the spirit of Christ when he was in heaven, foretold National Churches under the New Testament.

Thirdly, When Christ Jesus himself came upon earth in person, he foretold National Churches under the Gospel.

Fourthly, We find a governing Church-power in the New Testament exercising Ecclesiastical Authority, and the particular Congregations submitting thereto, without one word of contradiction.

Fifthly, The great ends of all Church-constitutions, (when Nations are converted) are best served in the National Church-way, and threatned to be ruined in the Independent Church-way.

Hence I draw my conclusion, and I think with evidence enough, That the National Church-way is Gods way, and the Independent Church-way is none of Gods way.

Proposition II.

That the Objections made by the Independents against National Churches under the New Testament, are of no force or value.

Obj. 1. FIrst, They object against inferring National Churches under the New Testament, from the Prophets foretelling the conversion of Nations and Kingdoms, thus, They say a Christian Nation is one thing, and a Christian National Church is another thing.

Ans. 1. A Christian Nation in Covenant with God, and a Christian National Church is

is one and the ſame thing, becauſe the Covenant conſtituteth the Church; they are terms convertible. Now I have proved that the Prophets have not only foretold the converſion of Gentile Nations to the ſimple owning of the Chriſtian Religion, but the calling them alſo both Kings and People into a Covenant Relation to God as *Iſrael* was. Now as the Covenant between Man and Wife, and Maſter and Servant, doth conſtitute the Relation between Husband and Wife, and Maſter and Servant; ſo doth the Covenant between God and a People, where God by his Miniſters tendreth it, and a people by Profeſſion and Baptiſm receive it, they are all Gods people and Church-members. If a ſingle perſon accept it, as the *Eunuch*, by accepting the Covenant, he became a Church-member. If the Jailour and his houſhold, accept the Covenant, all the members of that Family are members of Gods Church. And if a Nation receive it, then that Nation is Gods Church. This is a ſure rule, whenever the Covenant is tendred and accepted, there is the Church: and alſo this is as ſure that the Covenant and the Church are commenſurable.

I,

Obj. 1. I, but you are to prove not only that the Prophets have foretold National Churches, but National Churches in a formal proper Political ſenſe, according to your definition.

Anſ. Firſt, The National Church of *Iſrael* was ſuch a Church, and the Prophet *Iſaiah ch.* 19. *v.* 24. ſpeaketh of *Egypt* and *Aſſyria*, as Siſter-Churches to her. And there is the ſame reaſon for ſuch an union and government *now*, that there was *then*, as hath been proved before.

Secondly, Conſider what hath been ſaid already, that when the Prophet *Zachariah* ſaith, *Strong Nations ſhall come and worſhip before the Lord.* The word Nation, as the word Army and Kingdom, doth imply order in, and government over the whole multitude: without order never did nor never can take the name of a Nation, Army or Kingdom.

Thirdly, The viſible Church being a Polity Eccleſiaſtical, and the perfection of all Polities muſt in reaſon be judged to comprehend in it whatſoever is excellent in all other bodies Political. Now theſe three things belong to the excellency of all bodies Politick, whether Cities, Armies, Navies, Univerſities or Kingdoms, to which the Church is compared. Firſt,

First, That all the parts be ſo ordered, that every part may be in the beſt capacity, mutually to give and receive ſuccours.

And ſecondly, That no part may have power or opportunity (if poſſible) to hurt themſelves or the whole, without controll.

And thirdly, That there be a ſuperior power cloathed with authority, both to receive appeals, and right injured perſons by any of the parts. For theſe reaſons 'tis abſolutely neceſſary that the whole be united into one body, with governours over the whole, and not that any part ſtand Independent.

Therefore thus it is in all Corporations whatſoever throughout the world. All the particular Troops and Companies of great Armies are united into one body, and have their General and Council of Officers, for the government both of particular Officers and Companies in every Nation: why then ſhould any one imagine it ſhould be otherwiſe in the Church of every Nation, ſince the Church is compared to an Army with Banners. All the particular Ships of a Navy, are all under the command of an Admiral. All the particular Colledges in Univerſities, are under the government of Chancellors. All the Companies

panies and Wards in great Cities, are all under the government of their Maiors and Council. To conclude, All the Families and Corporations in all Kingdoms and Common-wealths, are under the government of ſome ſupream Magiſtrate over the whole.

Hence too it appeareth, that for a converted Chriſtian Nation to turn into a formal proper Political Church, is perfectly of the Light of Nature, 'tis not of the nature of thoſe things that want a particular inſtitution, no more than that a man ſhould love himſelf and ſeek his own preſervation. Therefore as we never heard of a multitude of Souldiers in a Nation, that did not turn into a formal Army, ſo never do we find (as I humbly conceive) that a Chriſtian Nation did not turn into one formal Chriſtian Society or Church, in my ſenſe, that is, into a formal proper Political Society.

To conclude then, If we ſhould not underſtand the Propheſies of the Prophets, of the converſion of National Churches in my ſenſe, that is of Political Churches, the viſible Church in Nations, when converted, would want the excellency of all other bodies Politick, which is abſurd to con-

conceive, because being a Polity Eccleſiaſtical, it muſt needs have the perfection of all Polities, according to the mind of God, the ſoul being of more worth than the body. Therefore the Prophets cannot well be underſtood of National Churches in any ſenſe ſhort of my definition.

Obj. 2. But how can all the particular Congregations in *England* make one Church?

Anſ. By their joint profeſſion of one Faith, their agreement in one and the ſame ſubſtantial Worſhip; by their one Baptiſm, one Communion, as opportunity offereth, and by their union into one Eccleſiaſtical body, with a governing Church-power over the whole.

Secondly, Why not many Congregations in one Nation make one Church as well as many Towns, Cities and Villages make one Kingdom, or a hundred or a thouſand particular Troops or Companies make one Army.

Obj. 3. If we have National Churches as the Jews had, we muſt have National Officers as the High-Prieſt was, and one National place for Worſhip, as the Temple was.

Anſ. Firſt, The Temple was not eſſential

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to their National Church ſtate, that's plain, becauſe they were formed into a National Church long before ever the Temple was built.

Secondly, Touching a chief Prieſt in every National Church of the New Teſtament, though I dare not ſay a chief Prieſt is eſſential to every ſuch Church, I would be loath to diſparage the Churches that through neceſſity are without them, yet for every National Church, eſpecially where there is a Prince of the true Religion at the head; I doubt not to ſay if Prelacy be not of particular expreſs Inſtitution, yet for the well being of the Church it is of divine approbation, as well as Chriſtian Magiſtrates, the Lords day, and divers other things, for which we can find no plain precept; becauſe the reaſons of Gods appointing Prelacy in the National Church of the Jews, ſeem to be all in being now as well as then, for the good of the National Churches of the New Teſtament. The learned Lord *Bacon* therefore concludeth peremptorily, *That Prelacy for Kingdoms is abſolutely the beſt government.* Take his own words, *For the government of Biſhops*, ſaith he, *it is warranted by the word of God, and by the practice of the antient Church in the better times,*

In a Book called Certain Conſiderations for pacification and edification for the Church of England.

times, and much more convenient for Kingdoms, than parity of Ministers, which no doubt was the judgment of *Calvin*, as appeareth by his Letter to the King of *Poland*, wherein he adviseth him to set up Bishops and Archbishops, and a Patriarch for that great Kingdom, what judgment soever he might be of for places under other circumstances.

There are four reasons of Gods erecting Prelacy in the National Church of the Jews, and I say they are all in being now for the National Churches of the Gospel.

The first was for order sake, *The Church*, saith *Cyprian*, *is not a body made up of similar parts, all of like nature and name with themselves, and the whole is a heap of sand, or a flock of sheep.* 'Tis not enough that the parts are together, but such as consisteth of divers members, of distinct places, situations, forms and offices; as a House, City, Army, and the Humane body.

This is the reason why the Professors of each National Church are put into parts, under particular Officers, as the General of an Army putteth his Souldiers to avoid confusion. And why the officers do not subsist in a parity, but subordination with a chief Priest over the whole, as the Officers and Souldiers in all the Armies of the world

world ever did under a Captain General over the whole. I say 'tis for order sake to avoid confusion, which cometh of parity in the Clergy.

The High-Priest, saith *Grotius*, *was not only a type of Christ, but served for order also*: whereupon he concludeth, *that if the Jews would receive the Faith of Christ, there was no reason to alter that government which so many Ages did commend.* He proceedeth upon this ground, *That the National Churches of the Gentiles would find the same cause of setling the Clergy in a subordination to a chief Priest, as the National Church of the Jews did, even for the preservation of order.*

Secondly, For unity sake to prevent schisms, *Calvin* telleth us his experience, *That parity among Ministers produceth schisms and dissensions.* Great use to this purpose may be made of the words of St. *Jerom*, which divers learned men have noted to us, *That throughout the world it was ordained that one Presbyter should be set over the rest, and have superiour power over the rest.* And saith, *The safety of the Church did consist in the dignity of the chief Priest.* Now whether St. *Jerom*, by saying it was decreed throughout the world, would be understood of a decree made by the Apostles upon the occasion of

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the Schism at *Corinth*, as some learned men have been apt to think, or the effect of the experience of all Christian Countries of the evils of Ministerial parity, and the want of Prelacy, as others it cometh much to one, since *vox populi Dei*, is *vox Dei*, saith Dr. *Owen* himself. If the whole world agreed in Prelacy upon experience, it was because the whole world was ill at ease without it. It was not the effect of mutual correspondencies of particular Countries for secular ends, but the effect of the care of all particular Countries to preserve themselves from ruine by schisms and divisions, such perhaps as we have suffered in *England* since the Covenant overthrew the Bishops.

The adversary of Christ and enemy of his Spouse, saith S. *Cyprian*, *therefore persecuteth the Bishops, that having taken him away, he may without check pride himself in the ruines of the Church*, *Ep.* 55. as we have found it in *England*. *I would to God*, saith *Melancthon*, *it lay in me to restore the government of Bishops, for I see what a Church we shall have, the Ecclesiastical Polity being dissolved: I see*, saith he, *it will be far more intolerable than ever it was.* Let godly men consider this.

Thirdly, As Prelacy was erected in the Jewish Church for order sake and to pre-

ſerve unity; ſo in the third place, to influence the King by godly counſels and a godly converſation. Let us conſider firſt, the Kings of the true Religion we own to be ſupream governours in all cauſes Eccleſiaſtical as well as Civil in their own Dominions, according to the pattern of the Jewiſh Church, which was a National Church of Gods own Inſtitution, neither was the exerciſe of that power by the Kings of *Iſrael* ever withſtood by the Prophets: 'tis therefore a ſuperlative truſt that God is pleaſed to put into the hand of Kings of the true Religion, which the Prophet *Iſaiah* calleth *Nurſing Fathers*. 'Tis certainly great, for as the affairs of the Church went well or ill, the Kings of *Iſrael* are either commended or diſcommended. Is it not then highly reaſonable ſome eminent Church men be near the King to adviſe him, who by office are deſigned, and diſpoſition inclined to tend the affairs of Religion.

Then ſecondly, Foraſmuch as mean men are at ſo great a diſtance, that for ſuch there is no place for converſe; 'tis but reaſonable, and a great mercy of God to the Church, that there be ſome Churchmen of high place, as well as parts, learning and godlineſs, that may be as it were companions

panions to the King, which *Ignatius* biddeth to honour as the *Image of God*. The *Prince* of *Prieſts*, whoſe company he will not diſdain, and to whoſe counſels he will be apt to incline. *'Tis their office*, ſaith one, *to inſtruct the King to righteouſneſs, by their ſanctity to be a rule to the Court, and to diffuſe their exemplary piety over the body of the Kingdom, to mix intereſt of Religion with deſigns of State, and to make them have as much of the Dove as of the Serpent.* Such eminent Churchmen take the name of *Princes of the Sanctuary* in the Old Teſtament, and *Dignities* or *Glories* in the New, as Dr. *Hammond* expoundeth the word; *which ſome not being afraid to ſpeak evil of*, are ſaid by the Apoſtle *Jude, to periſh in the gainſaying of* Chore, *who roſe up againſt* Moſes *and* Aaron. *Iſa.* 43. 28. *Jude v.* 8.

But to return. 'Tis remarkable that all the days of *Jehoiada* the High-Prieſt, he being a holy and good man, as well as great, King *Jehoaſh* was ſo influenced by his godly Counſels and pious example, that the affairs of Religion went well all his days, and they buried him among the Kings, becauſe he had done good to *Iſrael*, both towards God and towards his houſe, but after his death the Princes of *Judah* corrupted the King by evil counſel, and the affairs of Religion went to wreck, ſo *2 Kings* 12. 21.

that this godly Prelate was the ſupport of the affairs of Religion all his life, by being ſo near the King.

Now for any one to infer from the poſſibility of erring in judgment or practice of ſome particular Biſhops to the nullity and hatred of the office, as the manner of ſome Adverſaries is, is to overthrow all Governours and Government as well as theirs. For that it is as true of Kings and Parliaments as Biſhops, wiſdom teacheth in that caſe not to ſay what is poſſible, but what is moſt probable. And is it not more probable that the Biſhops of the true Religion, being Divines by profeſſion, ordinarily men of the greateſt parts, learning and experience, that they ſhould in Eccleſiaſtical cauſes at leaſt, being matters proper to their profeſſion, make truer judgment, and conſequently give better counſel than other men who are not of that profeſſion. Will any that is ſick go to the Lawyer for Phyſick, becauſe 'tis poſſible for the Phyſitian to err.

Right of the higheſt power. Preſent State of Eng. *p.* 238, 239.

Grotius telleth us the Hiſtory of all times proclaimeth the many commodities that have come to the Church by Biſhops. And Dr. *Chamberlain* in his Book called *The Preſent State of* England, telleth us, *That the memory of Biſhops ſhould be precious to us.* If we con-

conſider they were the Authors of ſo great benefits and advantages to this Kingdom, that there are few things of any importance for promoting the welfare of this Church and State, wherein the Biſhops and Prelates under God, have not been the principal inſtruments.

He inſtances in the good Laws of *Magna Charta*, all made by the advice of Archbiſhops and Biſhops. The union of the two houſes of *York* and *Lancaſter* by Biſhop *Morton*, then Privy Counſellor. The union of *England* and *Scotland* by Biſhop *Fox* a Privy Counſellor. Biſhop *Ridley* was a zealous promoter of *Chriſts Hoſpital* at the firſt erecting it, coming in perſon to the Lord Mayor Sir *Richard Dobs*, and Court of Aldermen, to *Guild Hall*, to be an Advocate for the poor, and encourage the work. Moſt of the beſt endowed Colledges in both Univerſities, very many Hoſpitals, Churches, Caſtles, have been founded and built by Biſhops.

Fox *Acts and Mon. Tom.* 3. *p* 509.

The Reformation in *England* was begun and promoted by Biſhops, and four of them ſuffered Martyrdom upon it. This laſt act hath procured the mortal hatred of the Biſhop of *Rome* to the *Engliſh* Prelacy ever ſince: inſomuch that when the news came to *Rome* of the Parliaments vote to extir-

Biſhop Sanderſon *in his Ep. to his Book of Sermons.*

pate Prelacy root and branch, they ſung and rejoyced upon it, ſaying, *Now the day is ours in* England. The ſignal acts of Piety and Charity of the *Engliſh* Prelates upon their Reſtauration, is very remarkable.

They ſoon agreed and Redeemed abundance of Chriſtian ſlaves out of ſlavery. The famous acts of Dr. *Juxon*, late Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, Doctor *Sheldon* the preſent Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, Doctor *Duppa* late Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, Doctor *Warner* late Biſhop of *Rocheſter*, and Doctor *Coſins* late Biſhop of *Durham*, are in the Book ſpecified, more particularly ſet down, to which I refer the Reader. The Biſhop of *Rocheſter* built houſes for twenty Miniſters Widows, and endowed them with twenty pounds *per annum* for each perſon: and as I have heard, gave fifty pounds *per annum* to a Chaplain to ſerve them in the affairs of their ſouls. The Biſhop of *Durham* ſaid, when he came to that See, he would build Gods houſe before he would provide for his own. Let Diſſenters conſider whether the Biſhops Lands ſerved for ſuch purpoſes when they came into Lay hands.

D. Chamberlain *Preſent State of* England, *p.* 238.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, As Prelacy was erected in the Jewish Church for order sake, and to preserve unity, and to influence the King by godly counsels, and a holy conversation. So also in the last place, for the more honourable estate of Religion, and the more profitable administration of Doctrine and Discipline. How was it else that God set the Priesthood so high, and gave them such large revenues, and to some the names of Princes of the Sanctuary. Mr. *Hooker* telleth us, that the Tribe of *Levi* being but the twelfth part of *Israel*, had in effect as good as four parts of all such goods as the holy Land did yield. So that their worldly estate was four times as good as any other Tribe in *Israel* beside: but the portion of the High-Priest was as much as three or four thousand others of the Clergy. It was not sure for the particular affection he bore to the person of this or that man, but for Gods own honour, they being as it were his own domestick servants, and for the honour of the only true Religion in the world, of the offices whereof they were the Ministers. God would not have the Priests of *Egypt* seem to have more honour, and to be better provided

Mr. Rich. Hooker's Eccl. Pol. *Book* 7. *p.* 62.

vided for than the Prieſts of the true God.

The great *Turk* for the honour of his Religion, as falſe as it is, will have his *Mufty*, a great man, to be a chief Prieſt in it, with ſuitable revenues for him.

The Gentiles here in *England* before their converſion to Chriſtianity, had twenty eight chief Prieſts, which they called *Flamins*, and three Arch Prieſts among them which they called *Arch Flamins*, as Mr. *Fox* obſerveth. So that the ſuperiority and dignity of ſome Clergy men above others, is of the light of Nature.

Fox *Acts and Monuments.*

And as Prelacy ſerveth for the honourable eſtate of Religion, ſo for the more profitable adminiſtration of Doctrine and Diſcipline. If a mean Prieſt, that never knew what riches and honour meant, ſhould preach to Princes and Nobles of the vanity of both, the Doctrine were not like to take the like impreſſion as if preacht by a Prelate that is a perſon both of Honour and Eſtate himſelf, and that maketh good what he ſaith by his own life: and ſo for Diſcipline. Foraſmuch as Diſcipline is Gods Ordinance for great

great men as well as mean men, one may eaſily perceive the neceſſity of Prelacy and Eccleſiaſtical Courts, of perſons of honour to adminiſter it, or elſe it muſt become either impracticable or unſucceſsful.

We have no Miniſters now that can work Miracles, as in the primitive times, to procure a veneration to their perſons, the want of Miracles now muſt be ſupplied by admirable holineſs, and good Laws, in conjunction with external grandure and eſtate, to make Diſcipline applied to great men effectual.

I hope I have now proved, that the reaſons of erecting Prelacy in the National Church of the Jews, are all in being now for the National Churches of the Goſpel. And that therefore the National Church of *England* hath as much need of a good Archbiſhop, as the National Church of the Jews of a good High-Prieſt.

Obj. 4. If it be the mind of God that all particular Congregations in each National Church, ſhould be united into one body, with a governing Church-power over the whole; why then ſhould it not

for

for the ſame reaſons be Gods mind that all the particular National Churches in the world ſhould be joined into one body, with a governing Church-power over the whole, as Papiſts would have it: And that no particular National Church ſtand Independent.

Anſ. 1. Firſt, Becauſe 'tis abſolutely impoſſible for Governours over one See: as for inſtance, *Rome*, to adminiſter an orderly Church-government over all the National Churches in the world, becauſe ſome are at ſo vaſt a diſtance, that in the judgment of ſome that have computed it, no Appeals can be made from ſome Countries under three years time. So that ſuch an union and government would be for deſtruction of the whole, not edification. "That which is profi-"table for one Nation, ſaith *Calvin*, "cannot by any reaſon be extended to "the whole world, for there is great "difference between the whole World "and one Nation. Again, 'tis as if a "man ſhould affirm that the whole world "may be governed by one King, becauſe "one Field or Town hath but one "Maſter.

As

As it agreed well with the ſtate of the Jews, that they being one Nation, had one chief Prieſt, *So is it good likewiſe*, ſaith Mr. *Nowell* to *Dorman*, *that every Chriſtian Nation have their chief Prieſt or Biſhop.*

Anſ. 2. Secondly, Such a Government would invade the rights of particular Princes, given them by God himſelf, which is to be ſupream in their own Dominions in all Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical as well as Civil. They being appointed by God to be Nurſe-Fathers of the Church in their ſeveral Dominions, and to take care of Religion, as well as the Civil peace, and to be accountable to God for the diſcharge of their truſt.

It followeth that every chief Biſhop muſt keep his own Province, and hold it under the King, that is Primarily truſted with the care both of Religion and the Civil peace within his own Dominions: ſo that though every chief Biſhop as the Miniſter of Chriſt, hath his office from Chriſt, yet the exerciſe of it in this or that Princes Domini-

Dominions, dependeth upon the King, becauſe ſometimes there is cauſe to put down one and ſet up another. As *Solomon* did when he put down *Abiathar* and ſet up *Zadoc*.

So I have done with my ſecond Propoſition, and I hope proved it, that the objections of the Independents made againſt the National Church-way are of no force nor value.

Propoſition

Propoſition *III.*

That the place of Scripture from which the Independent Catechiſt inferreth the Independent Church-way ſet up in the room of the National by Chriſts own appointment, he hath quite miſtaken the true ſenſe and meaning of. And the place in the judgment of many great Divines ſerveth the quite contrary purpoſe.

THE place of Scripture is the 18*th* of *Matthew* from verſe 15. to verſe 20. *If thy Brother treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother. If he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed. And if he ſhall neglect to hear, then* TELL IT TO THE CHURCH. *But if he neglect to hear the Church, then let him be to thee as a Heathen man and a Publican. And whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth,*

ſhall

ſhall be looſed in Heaven. Again I ſay unto you, that if two of you ſhall agree on Earth as touching any thing they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven; for where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them.

It hath been obſerved by divers, that when men fall in love with a by-opinion, it doth ſo ſtrangely bribe the fancy, that men think the Scripture ſpeaketh plainly for their opinion, and *every* where, when others of a free and ſound judgment can find it *no* where.

The Catechiſt from this context of Scripture collecteth, That Jeſus Chriſt hath made a ſtrange alteration in the frame of the Church, both in reſpect of the Matter, Form and Government thereof. But the truth is, he is greatly miſtaken, for that Jeſus Chriſt hath not by theſe words made any alteration at all, neither in the one reſpect nor the other.

'Tis true, that for Ordinances of Worſhip, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth here ſuppoſe particular Congregations would be in being under the New Teſtament, in which his worſhip ſhould and ought to be celebrated, (though when Chriſt gave

gave theſe directions, there was not yet any Chriſtian Congregations formed) but this was no new thing, for ſo it was in the National Church of the Jews, they had their Synagogues all over the Country of *Judea*, which the Pſalmiſt calleth *the houſes of God*; and why ſo, but becauſe the worſhip of God was celebrated there, as it is now in our Pariſh-Churches. And 'tis alſo true that Chriſt would have all the Congregations meet in love, and make their prayers in holy concord, and vouchſafeth them his preſence. *But* what new thing is there in all this, dare any one ſay, that it was not thus in the particular Congregations of *Judea* belonging to the National Church of the Jews. Was it not the mind of Chriſt, who was then both *King*, *Head* and *Huſband* of the Church, as well as now. That the particular Churches of *Judea* ſhould meet in love, and agree together, and make their prayers in holy concord, as well as he would now have the particular Congregations of the Goſpel. Surely it was Brotherly concord and Church-unity was as pleaſant to Chriſt then as now. *How pleaſant a thing is it*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *for Brethren to live together in unity.* When the Church in her degenerate ſtate faſted for

Pſal. 83. 12.

Pſal. 133. 1.

Isa. 58. for ſtrife and debate, it was as diſpleaſing to God then as well as now. And who dare ſay that for thoſe that prepared themſelves according to the preparations of the Sanctuary, that God did not vouchſafe them his ſpecial preſence then as well as now? Chriſt ſaith, *where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midſt of them.* And God ſaith Exod. 20. 24. to the Church of old, *In all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee and bleſs thee.* What is this but the ſame thing in other words? He was Pſal. 65. 2. known by the *Name of God that heareth* Pſal. 145. 18. *prayers, and ſo nigh to all that called upon him in truth; that before they call I will anſwer,* Pſal. 65. 24. ſaith he, *and while they are yet ſpeaking I will hear.*

But the Catechiſt proceedeth further, and ſaith from theſe words, *TELL THE CHURCH*; that as the very name of the Church, and nature of the thing, beſpeaketh a Society, ſo it is evident, ſaith he, that *no Society* but that of a particular Church of the Goſpel can be here intended.

Anſ. 1. 'Tis true, the Name of the Church, and the Nature of the thing doth beſpeak a Society. The Catechiſt hath no Adverſary in this, but that from the

the Name of the Church, or Nature of the thing, *no Society* is intended but that of a particular worſhipping Church, compoſed of *real Saints*, *formed* by *a ſpecial agreement*, *ſtanding Independent*, enjoying all Church-power within themſelves, which is the Catechiſts notion of a particular Church of the Goſpel. As there is not ſuch a word or tittle in the Text, ſo 'tis utterly denied that from the *Name* of the Church, or the *Nature* of the thing, any ſuch thing followeth.

Firſt, Not from the *Name of the Church*, for *that* in ſome places is given to every Congregation, *bad* as well as *good*. The word *Church*, ſaith *Grotius*, by the Septuagint is given to every Congregation, and in very many places to the Synedry, or governing Church of Officers, diſtinct from the people. *David* ſpeaketh of the *Church, or Congregation of the Gods*, Pſal. 80. 1. that was the governing Church of Officers; and in many other places, as divers learned men have obſerved. *Mr.* Rutherford *peaceable Plea.*

Secondly, Not from the Nature and Reaſon of the thing, for that giveth the ſenſe of thoſe words, *Tell the Church*, not to the Multitude, but to the Ruling Church, becauſe 'tis the Church that hath the power of hearing complaints,

redreſſing injuries, and adminiſtring cenſures, which is the work of Church-governours, to whom Chriſt hath committed the Keys of Doctrine and Diſcipline, as appeareth by every place of Scripture where there is any mention of Chriſts donation of the Keys of Diſcipline. There are but two places beſides this, and it will appear by both of them, that Chriſt put the Keys into the hands of Church-Officers, the Apoſtles and their ſucceſſors in the Miniſterial Office, *not the people*, *Mat.* 16.19. To *Peter* Chriſt ſaith, *Ile give* thee *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatſoever ſins thou ſhalt bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* So *John* 20. 21, 23. *As my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you,* ſpeaking to the Apoſtles, *And whoſe ſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted, and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.* The third place is this, *Mat.* 18. 18. where we have the ſame words. By thoſe other two places where we ſee the Keys are expreſly given to Church-Officers, we have ſufficient light to underſtand who are meant by the *Church* in this place, that is to receive accuſations, and adminiſter cenſures, not the common people, the Church of Profeſſors, but the governing

verning Church of Officers to whom Christ saith, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*, denoting a Pastoral sending, which agreeth not to the people in any tolerable sense.

The Church then in this 18. of *Matthew*, that is to be *told*, is not to be understood of an Independent Church of Professors, but the governing Church of Officers. And here take notice, that upon the overthrow of the Government, when the spirit of Independency turned rampant, the Keys being forced out of the hands of Church-Officers, and thrown into the body of the people, experience quickly put this new conceit of Independency to open shame. Good God, what work did the common people make with them! Women and Boys fall to preaching, and great numbers of unordained men, of the lowest of the people, take the boldness not only to preach publickly, but to administer the holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper, which horrible profanation of holy things Mr. *Hooker* of *New England* taking notice of, saith, *The practice laboureth with the loathsomeness of it self*, of this by the by. *M. Hooker Eccl. Pol.*

Secondly, The Catechist by limiting the sense of these words *tell the Church*, to

a particular worſhipping Church, forſaketh the conduct of the moſt excellent guides of the Church, and contradicteth the general ſenſe of the moſt learned Interpreters of Scripture in all Countries by the name of Congregation or Church, *Mat.* 18. 17. learned men, ſaith *Grotius*, and among them the famous *Beza*, not without reaſon underſtand *not all the people*, but the Synedry, for by the Septuagint the word is given to every Congregation: And in *Moſes*, by the Congregation is meant the Synedry of 70 Elders, as *Eben Ezra* and *Rabbi Solomon* have long ſince noted.

Right of higheſt Power, p. 177.

Inſtit. l. 4. *c.* 9. *Sect.* 1. *Calvin* is ſo far from expounding thoſe words, *where two or three are gathered together in my name*, to concern only a particular Aſſembly, that he ſaith they reach to a General Council, if it be ſought of the Scripture, ſaith he, what is the authority of Councils, there is no plainer promiſe than in this ſaying of Chriſt, *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midſt of them.* And *Pareus* ſaith, it is a general promiſe of Chriſts grace in the Church, *ſive magna, ſive parva*, whether great or ſmall.

Again, upon theſe words *Mat.* 18. 17. *Tell the Church.* Jeſus Chriſt here commandeth

mandeth, ſaith he, that your ſtubborn refuſers of admonition, ſhould be brought to the judgment of the Church, which is the Aſſembly of Elders. In another place, I never thought it uſeful, ſaith he, to commit the power of Excommunication to every Paſtor, for it is an odious thing and an example not to be approved, and which would ſoon ſlip into tyranny.

Mr. *Rutherford* a famous Scotch Divine, taketh notice that not only St. *Chryſoſtom*, St. *Auſtin*, St. *Jerome*, St. *Cyprian*, St. *Ambroſe*, all expound the place of the Overſeers and Watchmen of the Church, but all our eminent Divines ſay thus, *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Pareus*, *Chemnitius*, *Aretius*, *Eraſmus*, *Polanus*, *Hemmingius*, *Hyperius*, *Muſculus*, *Junius*, *Piſcator*, *Bucanus*, *Rivetus*, *Cartwright*, *Marlorat*, *Bucer*, and ſo many more, that would be tedious to mention; look the *Harmony of Confeſſions*. Rutherfords peaceable Plea.

Thirdly, From theſe words of Chriſt in caſes of Scandal, *to tell the Church*; *Calvin*, that man of renown among the Non-conformiſts, he goeth further; and in another place expreſſeth himſelf thus, *Truly*, ſaith he, *If a man nearly weigh the words, here is deſcribed a ſtayed ſtate, and a perpetual order of the Church.*

Chriſt

Christ did here institute no new thing, but followed the custom always observed in the antient Church of his own Nation, whereby he signified, saith he, that the Church cannot want the spiritual Jurisdiction that had been from the beginning.

Lib. 4. c. 11. Sect. 4.

Right of the highest Power.

Grotius also, that great Scholar, is directly of the same judgment, and expresseth himself methinks with a little more advantage; *Christ*, saith he, *doth here allude to the old way of Church-censures, and propoundeth the Jewish custom for the Christian pattern, saying nothing in that prescription but what is almost in the same words in the writings of the Jews.* So that in the judgment of these great men the place is so far from containing a new Institution of Independency of particular Churches, that it containeth a confirmation of the old way of Dependency, practised in the National Church of the Jews, to be observed by the National Churches of the Gospel when converted, which the Prophet had foretold, and himself foresaw.

Fourthly, To put it out of all doubt that these words, *tell the Church*, cannot be limited to any particular Congregational Church, or the Eldership thereof standing Independent, possessing all Church-power within it self, as the Catechist limiteth them;

There

There needs no more to be ſaid but this, that then injured Churches and injured Perſons in particular Congregations would loſe the benefit of Appeals, which are of the light of Nature.

Gradual Judicatories there muſt therefore be with us in the Chriſtian Church, as there was in the Jewiſh, wherein the aggrieved party may appeal from the leſſer to the higher, that againſt the very light of Nature, the adverſe party may not be the ſole judge and party too in the cauſe, and that a part miſcarry not while there is help in the whole. This was not learnt by *Moſes* in the pattern of the Mount, ſaith M. *Herle*, but taught by the light of Nature to *Jethro*, and by him given in advice to *Moſes*: *ex illo fundamento*, ſaith *Junius* upon the place, upon this very ground of *Jethroes* advice, *Moſes* defineth the manner of Appealing of parties; *Appeals*, ſaith Dr. *Whitaker*, *they are of Divine and Natural light, and certainly very neceſſary in every Society, becauſe of the iniquity and ignorance of Judges.* Appeals the light of Nature teacheth all Societies whatſoever, whether *Commonwealths* or *Armies*, *Univerſities* or *Navies*.

For the redreſs of wrongs, ſaith Dr. *Stillingfleet*, *the law and light of Nature calleth for Appeals, it is againſt both, and the Natural right of every* D. Stillingfleet Iren. p. 117.

every man, for any particular company of men calling themſelves a Church, to engroſs all Eccleſiaſtical power ſo into their hands, that no liberty of Appeals for redreſs can be made from it, which to ſpeak within compaſs, is a very high uſurpation upon the Civil and Religious Rights of Chriſtians, becauſe it leaveth men under a cauſleſs cenſure without any Authoritative vindication of them from it.

P. 126. In another place thus, *In a Congregation conſiſting of many particular Congregations, there muſt be a ſubordination of powers by the law of Nature, which granteth a right of Appeal to an injured perſon, from the lower and ſubordinate power to the higher and ſuperior.* The original of Appeals, is that injuries may be redreſſed, and in order to that, Nature dictateth that there ought to be a ſubordination of powers one to another, leſt any injury done through corruption or ignorance of the immediate Judges, prove irremediable, with much more to the ſame purpoſe, to which I refer the Reader.

Propoſition

The Fourth Propoſition.

That the Government of the Church in the Independent. Church way by a Major Vote of Common People, is not only Unſcriptural, but Anti-ſcriptural, and moſt horribly abſurd.

THE Brethren find great fault with the Church of *England*, becauſe of the Government (wherein wiſe and ſober men do indeed think ſome things may be mended) but at the ſame time magnifie their own new way of popular Government, as if it were worthy ſeparation from all other Societies, to enjoy ſuch a bleſſing. Whereas, Firſt, It is without Scripture to countenance it; for that 1. There appeareth no grant of any ſuch power from Chriſt to the Multitude; and 'tis impoſſible they ſhould be legally poſſeſs'd of ſuch a power without a grant. 2. There appears in Scripture no exerciſe

of any ſuch power by the multitude. A major Vote of the common people concluding the minor in any act of Government, is not to be ſeen in Scripture. Mr. *Baxter* ſaith, *One may as ſoon find a Pope there.* Election cannot be proved an act of the Keys, but a private popular act. 3. The multitude are never called *Rulers.* 'Tis never ſaid, The people that rule well. 4. Names of *Rule* and *Government*: As *Biſhops*, *Paſtors*, *Elders*, are not given *to* the multitude, but on the contrary. Secondly, It *is againſt* Scripture: for that, 1. Officers have the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven put into their hands by Jeſus Chriſt, as I have ſhewed, not the people, *Matth.*16.18, 19,20. *I give to thee the Keys*, ſaith Chriſt to *Peter*; *whoſe ſins ye remit*, ſaith Chriſt to his Officers, *they are remitted*, *John* 20.23. This Text expoundeth the word *Church* in *Matth.* 18.17. *Tell the Church.* It was the Church clothed with the power of remitting ſins, *v.* 18. which, by this of *Matth.*16.18. we ſee is the Church of Officers. Scripture ſpeaketh of the Church or Congregation of God's, or Officers diſtinct from the people, as I diſcourſed at large in my laſt Propoſition. The Church or Congregation that judged the Man-ſlayer, *Numb.* 35.24. is interpreted of the Church of Elders, *Judges* 20.4,6.

20. 4, 6. *Power*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *is given to us*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 8, ſpeaking of Church-power. Here we ſhould diſtinguiſh, The people are the Object of the Keys, *about* and for whom they are exerciſed, but not the ſubjects of the Keys by whom they are exerciſed; this is the work of Officers: and this will further appear. 2, Names of Government are given to Officers, and them only; as Paſtors, Biſhops, Guides, Shepherds, Commanders; contra-diſtinguiſhed from the people, who are called the Flock, not the Shepherds or Biſhops. Officers are ſaid to be over the people in the Lord. And the people they are under, in, or by the Lord's own appointment, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 22. and are commanded to honour, obey, and ſubmit to them, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. *Heb.* 13. 17.

Thirdly, Popular Government in the Church by a major Vote, is moſt intolerably abſurd, and therefore can never be of God. This appeareth, 1. Becauſe it confoundeth all real difference betwixt Governour and Governed: For if the people be the Governours, who are the governed? A Body, if it had not difference and variety of Members, were rather a Lump than a Body. 2. It maketh the common people Prelates over their own Presbyters, whom they are commanded to obey. The Brethren cannot

abide Prelacy over Presbyters in Miniſters; though in men of never ſo excellent parts, learning and experience: 'Tis Antichriſtian, but they can abide it in the common people, over their own Presbyters. Is not this abominably abſurd? What is this but to ſet the head where the heels ſhould ſtand, and the heels where the head ſhould ſtand? 3. It maketh the choice of Elders, and all Officers ridiculous and unneceſſary. Officers, though but Deacons, were firſt ſolemnly choſen out of the multitude, then ordained ſolemnly by prayer, and laying on of hands, and ſo ſolemnly ſet apart to their work; much more Miniſters. But if the people never choſen, never ordained, be all Governours, and may perform Office-work, to what purpoſe is all this ado, of chuſing and ordaining Officers, except it were to mock them? 4. If the Keys be given to the multitude, then it is the duty of all and every member of the Congregation to fit themſelves for the government of Churches; Is not this abſurd? Doth not my taſte diſcern perverſe things?

Fourthly, It undoubtedly engendreth to ungodlineſs; 1. By puffing up common people with pride, diſpoſing them to deſpiſe Government, to ſpeak evil of Dignities, to judge their betters, to ſlight their Teachers. 2. By overthrowing Family-Duties: For when

when they ſhould be repeating Sermons, and Catechiſing their Children and Servants, they ſhall be forced on the Lord's days to hear Cauſes, make Debates, which through the weakneſs and injudiciouſneſs of common people, and their utter unfitneſs for ſuch matters, turneth to vain jangling, choking of the Word, and ſo rendring the Ordinances fruitleſs. 'Tis true, the evil of popular Government in a Church of fine Education, where perſons of eminency are at the Head, both for parts, learning, and intereſt, doth not ſhew it ſelf, becauſe the eminent Paſtor, by his eminent parts and intereſt ſwayeth all; and well it is ſo: But popular Government in common hands, where the Paſtor hath but a common intereſt, in all ſuch Societies the horrible Error of it is quickly viſible, and the moſt fearful Confuſions and Diſorders that attend it. The Brethren urge in the behalf of popular Government, as followeth; The 1 *Cor.* 5. 6, 7, 12. they argue thus, They which were gathered together were by the power of Chriſt to deliver to Satan, to purge out the old Leaven, to judge and put out from among themſelves the inceſtuous perſon: But the whole Church were to be gathered together. Thus argueth *Robinſon.*

Answer 1. If the whole Church were to be gathered together for this business, then Women and Children, for they are parts of the Church (in the Brethrens own Opinion) but they will not allow that they have the power of the Keys. Secondly, 'Tis not like the whole Body of the common people came together in one place to make a Vote, because hardly possible in that Church, where was such a multitude of professors, as may be gathered from the many Prophets, Teachers, Speakers with Tongues, Interpreters, Miracle-Workers, Discerners of Spirits, Helps and Governments, and all Members of the same Body, hearing, seeing, and having the same care one of another. That they were so many, as that they were forced to meet in several places, appeareth by the 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. where the Apostle, from their distribution into several Congregations, stileth them *Churches*: though in respect of their unity of Government but one Church, 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. Thirdly, Though the whole Church were to come together about his censure, it appeareth not that the common people made any Vote. Fourthly, It appeareth by the Second Epistle, *Chap.* 2. *verse* 6. That his Censure was not by the whole, but a part. By *many*, saith the Text, not all: Sufficient to such a man is this

this punishment which was inflicted by *many, verse 6.* In that great Church were many Officers, as hath been said. Fifthly, (and lastly) If it be granted that the common people were interessed in this censure of the incestuous *Corinthian*, as well as the Officers, yet not all in the same sense invested with the same power, but every one in their own order and place. The *Pastors*, which were many, put him out by Pastoral Authority, clothed with Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction. The people by consent. In *Acts* the 4. 27. It is said, *Herod*, *Pilate*, the *Gentiles*, and *Israel* were all gathered together to deliver Christ. They all had a hand in it, but not equally, or in the same capacity. *Pilate* only did it Judicially; the rest by petition, procurance, and consent. The Brethren, as well as the Apostles and Elders, had their hand in the Decrees enacted at the Synod at *Jerusalem*, as appeareth *Acts* 15. 22. but not in an equal capacity. They had the liberty of speaking and consenting; but not the power of ordaining, or authoritative decreeing; That the Spirit of God giveth only to the Apostles and Elders: And therefore, *Acts* 16. 4. speaking of the Decrees enacted at the famous Synod of *Jerusalem*, he saith, *They were ordained of the Apostles and Elders*; leaving

☞ out the people. The miſtake of the Brethren lieth here; They confound that which ſhould be diſtinguiſhed; namely the different intereſt and capacity of Rulers and Ruled, in Church cenſures.

Object. *Robinſon* ſtriveth to wreſt the Keys out of the hands of the Officers, and to put them into the hands of the people by more Arguments. Thus he reaſoneth: *The order of Servants is inferiour to the order of them whoſe Servants they are. But the order of Church Officers is an order of Servants, and they by their office to ſerve the people.*

Reaſons diſcuſſed. Robinſ. p. 178.

Anſw. The fallacy lieth in theſe words, *Order of Servants.* Church Officers are indeed an order of Servants, but not as the word Servant ſignifieth *ſubjection*, as the Brethren uſe it, but *miniſtry* only. They are an order of Commanders too, whom the people that they ſerve are to obey and ſubmit to. But the people are no where bidden to command their Paſtors, but to obey them: neither are Paſtors any where bidden to obey their people. Paſtors are alſo compared to Fathers, people to their Children. To be a Father and a Servant even to Children conſiſteth well: For parents do indeed ſerve their children, by providing for them, and governing them; but not by obeying them, or being ſubject to them, this is odious.

Again

Again he reaſoneth thus: *The Order of Kings is the higheſt Order or Eſtate in the Church: But the Order of Saints is the Order of Kings; and we are Kings as we are Saints, not as we are Officers.*

Anſwer 1. Common Chriſtians are indeed called Saints, and all Saints are called Kings, but 'tis *to God*, not *to Men*, *Rev.* 1. 6. there lieth the miſtake of *Robinſon*. 2. Officers of the Church are both Saints and Kings, as their people are, and much more. For they are Kings not only to God, but as the word King ſignifieth a Ruler, ſo to men alſo; which their people out of office are not, but Subjects.

Again he reaſoneth thus: *As the Apoſtle proveth the woman to be inferiour unto, and leſs excellent than the man*; 1. *Becauſe the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man*: *And* 2. *Becauſe the man was not created for the womans ſake, but the woman for the mans ſake*: *So by neceſſary conſequence and juſt proportion it followeth, That the Elders are inferiour and leſs excellent than the Church, as being both* of *and for the Church.*

Anſw. This Argument faileth in the foundation. For 1. though it be true, That Officers are *for* the Church, that is, for the *edifying of the Church*: It is not true that they are for the Church, that is, for the Church

Church to *regulate*, *govern*, and *rule over* as the husband the wife, but the contrary, as hath been said. They are by Office to rule and govern the people; and the people by Divine precept, to obey and submit to them, as hath been often shew'd. 2. 'Tis most false, That Church-Officers are of the people, in the Brethrens sense; that is, that they derive their power, as Church-Officers, of or from the people. For then they should be the Ministers of the people; act in their names; teach and baptize by their Orders: Whereas Church Officers are in Scripture called *the Ministers of Christ*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. *The Ministers of God*, *Jer.* 33. 21. 2 *Cor.* 6. 4. and perform all Office-work in the Name, and by the Authority of Christ, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. not the peoples. The first Officers, the Apostles, have their Authority not of man, but Christ, and God the Father, *Gal.* 1. 1. Farther, Laying on of Hands, the ceremony of Installment into Office-work, is never in Scripture performed by common people, but Officers; persons standing in Christ's stead, from whom the right of preaching, exhibiting the Sacraments, and of using the Keys, doth arise and receive its virtue. Consult the places in the Margent.

1 *Tim.* 4. 14.
2 *Tim.* 1. 6.
1 *Tim.* 5. 22.
Acts 13. 3.
Acts 6. 6.

Brethren

Brethren have been deceived in this Argument for want of distinguishing designation of a person and place, from the derivation of power. The *first* is of man: the last is *of God* only. I have insisted the longer on this, to discover (if it might be to the satisfaction of the Brethren) the errour and vanity of this grand misleading mistake, that hath withdrawn many honest well-meaning men from the Parish Churches that were against Separation whilst their Judgments kept free from the poyson of this Church-confounding Error, notwithstanding all pretence of corruptions, who afterwards have judged their standing in such Congregations sinful, because the people were not interessed in the Government.

Having discoursed (as I humbly conceive) the Errors of the Independents Arguments against National Churches, and for popular Government, I now proceed to shew their Mistakes from Scripture, touching the matter and form of visible Churches, which was indeed the first cause of their Separation from the Parish Churches; and I shall do this in my ensuing Propositions.

The

The Fifth Propoſition.

The Definition of an Inſtituted Church of the Goſpel which the Independent Catechiſt giveth us, is abſolutely falſe, as the Catechiſt explains it.

I'Le firſt ſet down the Definition it ſelf, and then ſhew the falſneſs of it.

The Definition is this.

Catechiſt. p. 89. To the Queſtion, *What is an Inſtituted Church of the Goſpel?* The Anſwer is; A Society of perſons called out of the World, or their Natural worldly ſtate, by the Adminiſtration of the Word and Spirit, unto the Obedience of the Faith, or the knowledge and worſhip of God in Chriſt, joyned together in a holy Band, or by Special Agreement, for the Exerciſe of the Communion of Saints, in the due obſervation of all the Ordinances of the Goſpel.

If

If by a Society of perſons, called out of the World unto the Obedience of the Faith, and Knowledge, and Worſhip of God in Chriſt, had been underſtood being called from Paganiſm and Judaiſm to the profeſſion of the Faith of Chriſt's true Religion: And by being called to the Worſhip of God in Chriſt had been to be underſtood renouncing the worſhip of all falſe Gods and Aſſemblies, and betaking themſelves only to the Aſſemblies of Chriſtians: And by being joyned together in a holy Band had been to be underſtood the Baptiſmal Covenant only, it had then been a true Definition of a viſible Church: And it would have agreed to every Pariſh Church in *England*, and alſo to all the Reformed Churches.

But, as the Catechiſt explaineth his Definition, it neither agreeth to one nor other; and in truth 'tis abſolutely falſe.

He explaineth the *Call* of perſons out of the World, of effectual calling from a ſtate of ſin to a ſtate of real holineſs.

He ſaith, *Regeneration, Converſion, Vivification, Illumination, Sanctification in Holineſs attended with Juſtification and Adoption, as theſe are all diſtinct in themſelves, having ſeveral formal Reaſons of them, ſo they all concur to compleat that effectual Vocation,*

or

or Calling, that is required to constitute persons Members of the Church. That this is signified by the Typical Holiness of the Church of old, into the room whereof real *holiness was to* succeed, *under the New Testament.* And then from *John* the 3. and the 3. *verse*, he saith; *Christ requireth Regeneration, as an indispensible Condition, in a Member of his Church, a Subject of his Kingdom.*

Now, I say this Call, thus explained, is absolutely false. He maketh real Saints, and none but they, the Matter, and mutual particular covenanting the Form, as *Robinson* did of old. But 'tis manifest they are both deceived: Because,

First, This notion of the Matter of the visible Church, consisting of regenerate persons only by Christ's Institution, confoundeth the difference between the qualification of the Members of the visible Church of Professors, and the qualification of the Members of the invisible Church of the Elect. According to them, they are all one; (for to be a Regenerate person, and an Elect person, is all one, in the sense of the Catechist himself). But the Apostle *Paul* telleth us otherwise; *All are not* Israel *that are* of *it.*

And secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ himself telleth us, That of the Multitudes that

are

are *called* into his Vineyard, or Church, ſpeaking of the viſible Church, there are but *few Elect.* The Catechiſt telleth us in effect, That Chriſt calleth none into his Church, but ſuch as are Elect before they are called in thither. For he ſaith, *Regeneration is an indiſpenſible Condition in a Member of Chriſt's Church.*

Thirdly, That he is groſly miſtaken, appeareth plainly, in that his Notion of the indiſpenſible Matter of the Church, neither agreeth to his own Church, nor any Church that ever was in the World, nor ever like to agree to any Church that ſhall ever be to the end of the World.

1. Not to the Churches of his own form, for that experience hath proved, That they are ſo far from *all* being real Saints, that many have proved very wicked, and at laſt Apoſtates from the Chriſtian Faith and Religion: As for Inſtance, the Ranters, Seekers, Quakers, who for the moſt part came out of thoſe Churches.

2. It agreeth not to the Churches of the Apoſtles own planting, in which all ſorts of wickedneſs prevailed, as appeareth by the Apoſtles Epiſtles to them. The very Miniſters were ſo unregenerate, that the Apoſtle telleth us, *Phil.* 2. 20. *All ſought their own things, none the things of Jeſus Chriſt.* Jeſus Chriſt

Christ himself called one unregenerate man into the Church, and made him a Minister and an Apostle, and sendeth persons that he found idle into his Vineyard to work there. Can any one with reason think that he would have done so, if he would have none come into his visible Church but real Saints? This Notion must be false, because also it accuseth the Apostles of ignorance or negligence, or both, that they admitted such a world of unduly qualified persons into the Church. The Church of *Sardis*, instead of being all real Saints, there were but a few living names in that vast Church, the generality dead, and their Minister too: More of this anon.

Matth. 20. 3, 6.

3. This definition is never like to agree to any Church that is ever like to be in the world, because it is directly contrary to the representation that Jesus Christ hath made of the state of the visible Church on earth till the day of Judgment, which shall always consist of bad persons as well as good, Unregenerate as well as Regenerate, illustrated by a Barn-floor, wherein is Chaff as well as Wheat; A Corn-field, wherein are Tares as well as good corn; A Draw-net, which gathereth bad Fish as well as good; A great house, wherein are vessels of dishonour as well as of honour; A Kingdom, wherein are Rebels as well as good Subjects; Virgins,

some

ſome fooliſh as well as others wiſe; Servants, ſome ſloathful that hide their Talent, as well as faithful ſervants that improve their Talent. I hope enough is ſaid to evince, that the Catechiſts defining the Matter of the Viſible Church to be by Chriſts Inſtitution compoſed *only* of real Saints, is a *falſe* definition.

The Sixth Propoſition.

The Matter and Form of the Pariſh Churches, parts of the National Church of England, *and the Matter and Eſſential Form of the Primitive Churches erected by the Apoſtles themſelves are one and the ſame; and therefore our Pariſh Churches are as truly conſtituted Churches, as the particular Congregations in* Corinth, Epheſus, Philippi, *or any of the reſt:*

AS for the Matter of our Pariſh Churches, they are Companies of viſible Pro-

ſeſſors of ſaving faith in Chriſt, with their Children, ſome good, ſome bad; but all by the Baptiſmal Covenant ſeparated for God, and dedicated to him, and ſo take the name of Saints as the Primitive Churches did. Secondly, for the Form, tis their congregating themſelves together in a ſtated courſe, to worſhip God in Chriſt, the only Mediator between God and man; to call upon his Name; to hear his Word; to partake of his Sacraments: Which, I ſay, *was*, and *only was*, the eſſential form of the particular Congregations in *Corinth*, and the reſt; and *that*, and *that only* which gave them the Name of Viſible Churches of Chriſt, and diſtinguiſht them from the Congregations of Jews and Pagans: So that our Pariſh Churches, and the Primitive Churches of the Apoſtles own planting, are for Matter and eſſential Form exactly one and the ſame; As for particular Church Covenants to form particular Churches, there is no ſuch thing to be ſeen in the New Teſtament. The old Independent *Robinſon*, and his followers, and the late Independent *Catechiſt*, and his followers, reckon our Pariſh Churches falſly conſtituted, both in reſpect of Matter and Form; and therefore ſeparate from them into diſtinct bodies in oppoſition, if it might be, to pull them down to the ground. I wiſh

wiſh their miſtakes had been in a matter of leſs moment.

Their error lieth in this, that they put more into the definition of a truly conſtituted Church of the Goſpel than in truth belongeth to it, both in reſpect of the *matter* and *form*. Their miſtake touching the Matter of the Church, which they conceive by Chriſts Inſtitution to be compoſed only of really holy perſons, I have, I think, already diſcovered ſufficiently in my fifth Propoſition, that they are in an error: but my buſineſs being not only to prove *de facto*, that the brethren have loſt their way, but alſo to diſcover the particular turns, in arguing from Scripture, at which they loſt their way; I proceed, as I began, to ſhew how they have miſtaken the true ſenſe and meaning of the holy Scriptures, upon the falſe interpretation whereof they have built their new Notions, both touching the Matter and Form of the Church, as I have already ſhown touching Independency and popular Government.

For the Matter of the Church being real Saints by Chriſts Inſtitution, they argue thus from Scripture:

According to the Goſpel, ſay they, *Only Viſible Diſciples; Believers, Saints, are fit*

matter for the New Teſtament Church. This they gather from the Inſcription of *Paul's* Epiſtles to the Churches, where he ſtileth them Saints and ſanctified perſons, and the Commiſſion, *Matth.* 28. *Diſciple all Nations.* But, ſay they, *Your Pariſh Churches are full of perſons viſibly wicked, and therefore not the Goſpel Matter; your Churches being made of falſe Matter, cannot be true Churches.* To this effect *Robinſon, Can,* and divers others.

The fault of this Argument lieth here: The Objectors conclude, *That perſons cannot be viſibly wicked, and yet viſible Saints at the ſame time, in Scripture-language, as the word Saints is applied to the Viſible Church.* Now I'le prove they may: 1. From *Robinſon* himſelf, 2. From the Scriptures, 3. From the Teſtimony of learned men.

1. Firſt, From *Robinſon* himſelf: For *p.* 98. of *his Reaſons diſcuſſed*, he ſaith, *All true Churches, from the beginning to the end of the world, are one in Nature and Eſſential Conſtitution; and the firſt the rule of the reſt.* And in *p.* 74. of the ſame Book, he telleth us, *That* Ezekiel *affirmeth that* Jeruſalem *was more corrupt by half than* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *and yet* Jeruſalem *was the true Church of God.* See how this man hath cut the throat of his own, and other the Independents Objection againſt the Matter of our

Ezek. 16. 46, 47, 51, 52.

Pariſh

Pariſh Churches, by his doctrine from the Prophets; *Perſons may be both viſibly wicked, and yet* viſibly *of the true Church of God too, at the ſame time*: which in his own ſenſe is all one as to be viſible *Saints*, as appeareth by his deſcription of the Matter of the true Church; for he ſaith *Saints* are the *Matter*, *p.* 91. of his Reaſons diſcuſſed.

2. From the Scriptures, *Pſal.* 89. 7. The Aſſemblies even of ſuch wicked perſons as the Prophet *Ezekiel* complaineth of, are ſaid to be the Aſſemblies of *Saints*. The Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſpeaking of the Jewiſh Church, cryeth out, *Ah ſinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers, children that are corrupters, they have forſaken the Lord.* Yet God owneth them for his people. *My people, ſaith he, doth not conſider*, The Nation, for all this, take the name of *A holy nation*, Deut. 14. 2. Iſa. 1. 2. Deut. 14. 2.

Again, if our Churches cannot be called Churches of Viſible Saints, becauſe of the ſwarming of bad livers, how could the Church of *Sardis* be called a Church of Saints, that had but a few living names in it; the Miniſter, and generality of the people ſo dead to that which was good, that the few living Names are in ſpecial manner taken notice of in Heaven, and praiſed that they kept their life and vigour in the things of

God in the communion of ſuch a dead Church. And how could the Church of *Laodicea* take the name of a Church of viſible Saints; a company of wretched, miſerable, blind, naked, luke-warm Profeſſors, neither hot nor cold? How can the worſt Pariſh Church in *England* deſerve a worſe character? The Church of *Corinth* it ſelf, *Calvin* ſaith, not only a few had gone out of the way, but the infection had poſſeſs'd in a manner the whole body; and yet St. *Paul* reporteth them, a Church of Chriſt, and fellowſhip of Saints. Saith he, *I have noted already, that the Miniſtry was ſo bad, that* Paul *complaineth, all ſought their own things, none the things of Jeſus Chriſt*, Phil. 2. 21. And yet all theſe Miniſters and Churches were Saints, Churches of Saints, Golden Candleſticks, and the Miniſters Angels, for all that, in Scripture-language; ſuch as did curſe and ſwear, St. *James* called brethren, *James* 3. 10. *Unfruitful perſons appointed to the fire of hell*: and yet ſaid to be *in* Chriſt, *John* 15. 2. *Such upon whom the door of heaven ſhall be eternally ſhut*, are yet called Virgins, *Matth.* 25. 10. Such as believed not, Chriſt calleth Diſciples, *John* 6. 64, 66. *Simon Magus*, that wicked wretch, and the ambitious Phariſees, that loved the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God, are called Believers,

Inſt. lib. 4. *cap.* 4. *p.* 342.

lievers, *Acts* 8. 13. *John* 12. 42. Now consider, are not these terms of honour equipollent and convertible with Saints? Such as trod under foot the Son of God, are said to be sanctified persons, *Heb.* 10. 29.

3. *By the Testimony of Learned men.* There are many *Saints* or sanctified persons, saith Mr. *Baxter*, that shall never come to Heaven. Now 'tis the wicked that are shut out of Heaven; *Without are dogs*, saith the Text. So that a man may be a Saint in a sense, and a Scripture sense too, and yet a wicked man also. The same said Mr. *Cotton*, when he wrote his Book of Infant-Baptism: In a sense there specified, we may say Saint *Judas*, Saint *Demas*; and Churches of such are Churches of Saints, saith he. Saints Rest, p. 664.

By what hath been said, it appeareth manifestly, that persons may be visible Saints in Scripture-language, and visibly wicked persons too at the same time; and consequently, the very ground whereupon the Objectors declame against the matter of our Parish Churches as *false, sinketh under them.* Neither can the Objectors make their escape in this Argument, by running to the constitution; saying, the Churches of the New Testament were not constituted of wicked men, though multitudes proved so. It will not serve their turn; for though it be very true,

the Church is not conſtituted of wicked perſons, *as wicked*, nor with a purpoſe to indulge wickedneſs, but *as viſible* Profeſſors of the true Faith and Religion, put under the obligation of true Piety, and a holy life: yet it is manifeſt by all experience, the Church of old, and now alſo, were and are conſtituted of many wicked men, if all manner of wicked doings will denominate men wicked: And ſo are the Churches of the ſeparation alſo when they have done their beſt.

I now proceed to ſhew the ſameneſs between the qualifications of the Worſhippers of the Church of *Corinth*, and the reſt; and the qualifications of the Worſhippers of the Church of *England*, and to diſcover to the brethren their miſtakes in this great Matter. And here I agree to the poſition of diſſenters; That only viſible Saints are Goſpel matter; that a Church not conſtituted of ſuch, is a falſe conſtituted Church, as to the Matter; but then I deny that the Pariſh Churches are not viſible Saints in the ſenſe of Scripture, *as* the word Saint is applied to our viſible Church of which we now ſpeak, upon the ſame grounds that the word Saints is applied to the Church of *Corinth* and the reſt; 'tis applicable to the Church of *England*. The miſtake of the Brethren

thren lieth here; the Scripture notion of the word *Saints*, as applied to our visible Church, is *one* thing, and the Brethren's is quite another thing: They notion the word *Saints* in St. *Pauls* Epistles, to signifie necessarily the *holiness* of *Regeneration*, at least in our judgment of charity; whereas the word Saints, as applied to the visible Church, is to be understood of *Covenant holiness* in *a publick Judgment* of *certainty*. The whole Church are all Saints by consecration to God, but very few (in comparison) by regeneration of the Spirit of God.

And now to let in the light with the more clearness, let me first shew what *Covenant Holiness* is, and by what means persons attain to it: Secondly, Shew that the Church of *England* is in possession of it: And Thirdly, That the Primitive Churches took the Name of Saints from it, and that ours do so too.

First, What is *Covenant Holiness*? Persons and things are in Scripture said to be holy, when consecrated for God's use and dedicated to him. Thus the Vessels of the Temple were called holy, and the people of the Jews good and bad. The whole Nation are in this sense called holy, *Deut.* 7. 6. 14. 2. Not by the holiness of Regeneration; for the Prophet *Ezekiel* said of many, they

Ezek. 16. 47, 49. they were more corrupt by half than *Sodom* and *Samaria*, whose sins were *Pride*, *Idleness*, *Gluttony* and *Unmercifulness*; but by Consecration for God, and Dedication to him and his use by *Covenant*, they were holy. I call it Covenant *Holiness*, because on God's part, he was pleased to condescend to covenant with that people in a special manner to be a God to such and their seed as should be so consecrated for God, and dedicated to him: And on the Jews part, they also bound themselves to be God's people, and to be really holy: Circumcision was the token of the Covenant Relation between God and his people. Thus the old Church became Covenant-holy, and to take the Name of Saints, even such as were bad livers, as well as good.

Secondly, Now to shew that our Church of *England* is in possession of this holy Covenant-Relation to God, we must remember that the unbelieving Jews, for the rejection of Jesus Christ the great Prophet, became Un-Churched, and lost their Covenant-Relation to God, and interest in the Promise, *Gen.* 17. 7. The whole multitude of Gentile Professors of Faith in the Messiah, renouncing all false gods, and Religions, and accepting Baptism into his Name, succeed the Un-Churched Jews in their priviledg. This is the

the expreſs Doctrine of many Scriptures, more particularly *Rom.* 11. 20. *Thou*, ſaith the Text, (ſpeaking of the whole multitude of Chriſtian Profeſſors;) The word *Thou* is a collective term, uſed to comprehend Men, Women and Children, entring into Covenant, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12. **Standeſt**, ſaith the Apoſtle; *where* do they ſtand? *why ingraffed into the ſame olive tree*, ver. 17. that is the ſame holy Covenant, or Church ſtock, from which the unbelieving Jews and their Children were broken off. Now by what means do they become thus priviledged? Why by *Faith*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Thou ſtandeſt by Faith*: that is, the publick owning the doctrine of faith in Chriſt, or the Goſpel, which the Jews refuſed: He ſpeaketh here of the faith of Profeſſion, becauſe the whole multitude take the name of Believers from it, *Acts* 4. 4. So doth *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. 13. So that as the old people before they were broken off, *they* and *theirs* were all called Saints and Holy, from this holy Relation to God: So is it with the multitude of Chriſtian Profeſſors now, *whom* all together the Apoſtle calleth *Saints*, 1 Cor. 14. 33, 34. All the Churches of Chriſtian Profeſſors, he calleth Churches of Saints in that place; all that forſook Idols, and took the Chriſtian way, not only the beſt that one may

Rom. 11. 20. Gal. 3. 14. Eph. 3. 6.

may judg godly, but *all* of that *way*, chaff and wheat, regenerate and unregenerate, tares and good corn: all of the *way* he calleth the Church of God, 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. *Disciples of the Lord*, Acts 9. 1, 2. *Saints*, Acts 9. 13.

The Church of *England* then Renouncing Idols, and all false Religions, and Professing the Faith of Christ, and accepting Baptism into his Name; according to Scripture, they are the Disciples of the Lord, have the name of Believers, and visible Saints, as well as the Churches of the Apostles planting. Are not these Kingdoms, saith Mr. *Baxter*, added to the Church, as well as *Israel*? Are not all Professors of Christianity in *England*, as truly in the Church, as all in *Israel* were? I will make it good against Independents and Anabaptists, saith he.

Baxter's plain Scripture proof, p. 36.

Now thirdly, I am to prove, that though in the Primitive Church were some holy with the holiness of Regeneration, yet *as visible Churches*, they took the name of visible *Saints*, rather from the *first* Holiness; the holiness of the Covenant, which parteth all within the Church from all without: The first holiness maketh men *of Israel*, it is evident; the second parteth the Church within it self: Those that *are Israel*, from those that are only *of Israel*, and not *it*.

To

To prove that the Church, *as visible*, taketh the name of Saints from *Covenant holiness*, Consider first, When we speak of the Church, as *visible*, saying *visible Saints* are Gospel Matter; the word visible respecteth *men*, not *God*. Visible Saintship therefore must be understood of such a Saintship as is visible to men: Now the second *holiness*, as I call it, of *Regeneration*, is only visible to God; the Lord knoweth who are *his*, not *Man*. But the first holiness, namely that *of* the Covenant by separation for God, this is known to the Church infallibly; Men are no judges of the second, and therefore is not that whereby the visible Church is denominated.

Secondly, The holiness of Regeneration is the character of the few chosen ones in the Church, belonging to the invisible Church of the Elect, and therefore the vast multitude of the visible Church of Professors; into which number there are but a few elect, if we will believe our Saviour, *Matth.* 15. 20. are not like to be denominated Saints from that holiness, since there is a holiness, namely that of the Covenant, proper to the visible Church of Professors, and that not to some only, but to every individual person both good and bad; all are holy by Covenant, though but few by Regeneration.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That the visible Churches *now* take the name of Saints and God's people, as the old Church did, *Robinson* himself granteth; in that he saith, *The visible Church is one in Nature and Essential Constitution, from the beginning to the end of the world, and the* first *the* rule *of the* rest. Now the old Church took the name of Saints and God's people from Covenant-holiness, in a publick judgment of certainty; not from real holiness, in a private judgment of charity, *Ezek.* 16. 8. *I sware unto thee, and entred into covenant with thee, and thou becamest* mine, saith the Lord. The sign of the Covenant then was Circumcision; now by the Institution of Christ, *Baptism.*

Fourthly, If the visible Church, *as visible*, took the name of holy from *real holiness*, then the child of a known ungodly wicked man, could not be called a Saint by birth; but the Apostle concludeth every child of the Church, though the Parents be never so wicked, a *Saint* by *birth*, Gal. 2. 15. *We*, saith the Apostle, *that are* Jews *by birth, and not* sinners *of the gentiles. Saints* and *Sinners* stand in direct opposition in Scripture; and in the New Testament, 1 *Cor.* 7. 13. The Apostle reckoneth a *Child* a Saint by birth, if but one of the Parents attain to Covenant-holiness; I say Covenant-holiness, for the

Believer

Believer there is oppoſed to a Pagan, not to an unregenerate man; therefore ſignifieth neceſſarily only the faith of Profeſſion, which joyned with Baptiſm maketh men Covenant-holy. In this ſenſe *Zanchy* underſtandeth Saintſhip as attributed to the Church of *Corinth*. Take his own words.

Hear what I underſtand by the Name of Saints, ſaith he. *This name* Saint, *when ſpoken of men, is firſt generally taken for all thoſe that have conſecrated themſelves to the true God, giving their Names to Chriſt, and profeſs him and his* Religion. Zanch. De perſever. ſanctorum.

And Mr. *Cotton* hath ſaid, *That if all the Members ſhould make but an hypocritical, ignorant, and verbal profeſſion of Chriſt, and faith in him; yet I will not deny that ſuch a ſociety may have the name of a Church.* And thus far the nature of it, that the actions thereof are not *Nul.* Holineſs of Church Members, p. 62.

And now I have done my threefold engagement: 1. Shewn what Covenant-holineſs is; 2. That the Pariſh Churches of *England* are in poſſeſſion of it; 3. That the Primitive Churches, as viſible, took the name of Saints from it; and that ſo do ours by the like reaſon: As the whole multitude of Profeſſors at *Corinth* are ſtiled *Saints* by calling, ſo may the Profeſſors at *London* alſo. They are all called to the profeſſion of faith in the ſame

Lord

Lord Jesus Christ, and all own the same true Religion, except those that since our fatal divisions have Apostatized; they are all consecrated for God, and dedicated to him in Baptism; they are all of the Christian way, that very way upon which every individual person in the Primitive times took the name of *Saints*, *disciples* of the *Lord*, and the Church of God, as appeareth by *Acts* 9. 1, 2, 13. compared with 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. as hath been touched already.

Three things then manifestly appear from what hath been said to the shame of this plea for separation from the Church of *England*: First, That the Matter of the Church is true Gospel Matter, against the Brethren that affirm the contrary, and have made it the grand ground of separation. And 2. That the qualification of the Church Members at *Corinth*, and the qualification of the Church Members at *London*, are one and the same. And 3. the Brethren have a clear light whereby to discover at what turn their foot is gone out of the way: They have failed for want of distinguishing of Holiness and Saintship, and so of calling when applied to the visible Church, as the Scripture distinguisheth. The Scripture sense of it is one thing, and the Brethrens quite another thing.

Oh

O Eternal Lord God, who dwelleſt in light, and in whom is no darkneſs at all, pardon the ſin, and pity the infirmity of Erring Brethren. Open their Underſtanding, as thou didſt the underſtanding of the two Diſciples, to whom thou hadſt opened the Scriptures.

Now, that the light of this truth may ſhine the brighter, and the broken bones of the Church be healed, and ſet in joynt again, and every Member put into its own place; it is abſolutely neceſſary, that we not only verbally, but practically diſtinguiſh of holineſs yet further.

There is a threefold Holineſs; Firſt, that *of the Covenant from Profeſſion and Baptiſm*, which I call the firſt, and of which I have ſpoken already; yet let me further add, and let it be carefully conſidered, the Apoſtle *Paul* Rateth perſons within and without the Church, by their having or not having this Holineſs; 1 *Cor.* 5. 12, 13. *What have I to do to judge them that are* without, *do not ye judge them that are* within; ſpeaking of the Inceſtuous *Doctor* in the Church of *Corinth*, whom he calleth a *wicked perſon*, yet owneth him for a Member of the Church from his *Profeſſion* and *Baptiſm*; yea, *Simon Magus*

was within the Church, when *Cornelius* before Baptiſm was without.

Brethren having taken up Narrow Notions of the Church, are wont to rate perſons within and without the Church by *Real grace*, in the charitable Judgment of a few people, and conſenting to a particular Covenant. Nay, as they proceed in Diviſions, ſome are wont to Rate within and without the Church and Chriſtian Brotherhood, by agreement or not agreement, in their private opinion. But, was this the ſenſe of the Apoſtle, *Of Brethren*, when he ſaid, *Love the Brotherhood?* 1 *Pet.* 2. 17. What, were they particular Sects or Factions that he meant? *Oh, No.* It was all of the way of *Chriſtians*, in oppoſition to *Judaiſm* and *Paganiſm*: All ſuch were called *The houſhold of Faith*, good and bad together; till any turned *Apoſtates* from the Faith, or were Excommunicated for damnable *Hereſie*. Scandalous Church-members, though withdrawn from, by the Church, for their *ſcandalous Converſation*, were yet to be eſteemed *Brethren*, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 15.

Gal. 6. 10.

Let godly men then, that will be ruled by Scripture, judge and ſpeak accordingly. Let us Rate *Chriſtian Brethren* by joynt Profeſſion of the ſame Chriſtian Faith; joyning in the ſame Subſtantial worſhip of God in Chriſt,

Chriſt, and not by joynt profeſſion of Some by-Opinion.

Secondly, there is the *holineſs of Regeneration*, which parteth the Church within it ſelf: The *Really holy* from them that are but *Nominally* ſo: The *Iſrael* of the Church, from them that are only Of *Iſrael*, but not It; as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh.

Now thirdly, there is a Third Holineſs, and that is the *holineſs of Office*; and this diſtinguiſheth the Governing part of the Church from the Governed, foraſmuch as Church Officers are in a ſpecial manner ſet apart to a holy uſe, they attain to a *third holineſs* upon it; and though they be holy in common with the Multitude, as ſeparate from *Heathens*, and ſecondly with the holineſs of *Regeneration*, proper to the Elect, yet from their conſecration to Office-work Scripture attributeth another. A *third holineſs* to them upon that account alſo, as appeareth by theſe Scriptures, *Numb.* 16. 5. *Ezek.* 42. 14. 2 *Chron.* 23. 6. *Ezra* 8.28.

Now, as no man can legally attain to Church Priviledges, I mean in ordinary caſes, without the First holineſs, or as no man ſhall enter into heaven without the *ſecond*, ſo no man can lawfully (in ordinary caſes) perform Office-work without the

third. No man taketh this honour to himself (that is, lawfully) *but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*; that is, Into *Office as* well *as* he: Whoever then without it, ſhall in ordinary caſes attempt Office-work, breaketh the eſtabliſhed order of the Great God, who is *the God of order*, and *not of confuſion*. And no wonder then, that perſons that do ſo Irregularly, ſuffer deeply from the God of Order,

To ſum up all; The Brethren have generally rejected the *firſt holineſs*, and ſo reproached the Matter of our Church as *falſe*. And the moſt have ſlighted the *laſt holineß*, by making Office-work common to unordained men, that were never ſet apart to the work: and ſo have ſtrook at the very Order and Office of the Miniſtry.

The Good Lord grant them to ſee their Error, both in the one, and in the other.

The

The Seventh Propoſition.

That Jeſus Chriſt hath no where appointed CHARITY, *in Miniſter or People, to judge of the Real holineſs of Profeſſors, as a condition of Admittance into the Viſible Church: So, that except Profeſſion of Faith be accompanied with Signs of Real grace, it ought not to be accepted.*

THe Brethren that ſeparate have judged verily that he hath ſo appointed, and therefore find fault with the conſtitution of our Churches, as to the *Matter*, and think themſelves bound to withdraw from them, and pull them down to the ground to ſet up new Churches, gathered of perſons, who, by a particular Miniſter and People, ſhall, in the judgment of Charity, be judged *really* godly.

I do therefore, for the conviction of the Brethren, and their Return (if it may be) to

the communion, which they have sinfully forsaken upon this account, offer to make good to them, that they are deceived in this Matter.

But before I proceed to Argument, I would distinguish upon the exercise of a Judgment of Charity in relation to Church-membership.

There is the exercise of a Judgment of charity upon the *Sincerity of a Profession*, and the exercise of a Judgment of charity upon the *Real holiness of the Professor*: These are two things. When *Simon Magus* and the *Eunuch* professed to believe *Jesus* to be the Son of God, *Philip* was bound in *Charity* to judge them both Sincere in their Profession, that is, that they did both think as they spake, and believe as they affirmed; considering their *Profession* was accompanied with no apparent Signs to the contrary, and considering that God's work is secret, and sometimes sudden, and that it is impossible for man to know the contrary. And it is plain this profession did intitle them both to Baptism, and so let them into the Visible Church; but it is as plain by other Scriptures, that such an act of Faith alone will not prove men Really holy.

Joh. 2.23. *and* 12.42.

Again

Again ſecondly, there is the exerciſe of a Judgment of charity upon the Real holineſs of the Profeſſor *as a private Chriſtian*, and the exerciſe of it *as a publick Judge*, and as a condition of entring into the Church, by divine appointment: So that except perſons be judged Really gracious by a particular Miniſter and People, they cannot, according to Goſpel Rule, be admitted into the Church. Now theſe are two things: This laſt the Brethren affirm for truth and duty, but I utterly deny, for theſe Reaſons:

Firſt, Becauſe Scripture no where ſpeaketh of any Authority given by Chriſt, to Miniſters or People, to ſit in Judgment and ſuſpend Church memberſhip upon the Real holineſs of any man, that profeſſeth Faith in Chriſt, and deſired admittance into the Church; or that he ever appointed *Charity* to be a Judge of any ſuch matter to any ſuch end.

Secondly, Becauſe *Jeſus Chriſt* hath not given his Miniſters any particular Rules, whereupon to make up ſuch a Judgment, in order to ſuch an end.

Thirdly, Becauſe *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf did not only admit *Judas*, whom he knew to be unregenerate; but *John Baptiſt*, and the *Apoſtles*, by Chriſt's Commiſſion, did admit

all that would confeſs Sin, and profeſs Faith to Baptiſm, whether good or bad before; though a *generation of Vipers*, and though as wicked as *Simon Magus* the Sorcerer, and that without refuſing or delaying any one perſon, Man or Woman, in any one place, City or Country; at any One time of *Perſecution* or *Peace*, as all the Teſtimonies of the New Teſtament witneſs; which were impoſſible to be truly affirmed, if *Jeſus Chriſt* had ordered his Miniſters to judge of the Real grace of every Profeſſor, as a condition of Baptiſm. We muſt needs in all reaſon have heard of ſome among the many thouſands, then admitted, that ſhould not only have been delayed, but refuſed upon that account, in ſome place or other, at ſome time or other. When the Churches *had reſt*, *Acts* 9. 31. *and favour with all the people*: when Rulers durſt not perſecute for fear of the people; however it were, the *Apoſtles* changed not their courſe, they took all that came, all that would profeſs Faith and ſubmit to Baptiſm at any time; None were rejected.

Fourthly, The very qualifications of the Church-Members, both Miniſters and People, in the Churches of the *Apoſtles* own planting, render it utterly improbable, that ever they went ſo curiouſly to work in the admiſ-

admiſſion of Members. Some of *John*'s baptizing had not ſo much as heard, whether there were a *Holy Ghoſt*: And ſome of the *Church of Corinth* had not the *knowledge of God*, 1 *Cor.* 15.34. and denied a main Article of the Chriſtian Faith, namely, the *Reſurrection of the dead*, ſaying, it was *paſt already*, as our *Ranters* do now; they would cozen and cheat one another, and come drunk to the *Lords Table*, or Love-Feaſts.

How bad the *Miniſters* were, I took notice before from the 2 *Philip.* 21. how *they all ſought their own things*, *None the things of Jeſus Chriſt*; and yet theſe were the Miniſters of the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts* own Ordaining, and the Churches of their own planting.

Now, had they ſat in Judgment upon the Real holineſs of every Miniſter and Perſon, as a condition of entring into the Church and Miniſtry, they could ſcarcely have been ſo ſtrangely miſtaken, as to admit ſuch abundance of bad perſons, conſidering their extraordinary aſſiſtance of the *Holy Ghoſt* for the diſcerning of Spirits at that time: or if the Brethren will, notwithſtanding their Enormous evils, yet judge them Really gracious; a ſtrait which their Principles force too. In one word, ſaith Mr. *Cotton*, *There is no complaint* Paul *maketh of any Crime*

Crime in the Members of the Church of Corinth, *but may be found, and hath been found in those that have been Saints effectually called.* Cotton's *Holiness of Church-members*, *p.* 47. Then let them extend the same charity to *Parish Church-members*, and they will be forced to return to *their* communion again, and repent of their rash and unadvised Separation.

Fifthly, Such a Rule put in practice doth, in the very design of it, cross the Representation that *Jesus Christ* himself maketh of the state of the Visible Church on Earth, *Many are Called*, saith Christ, meaning effectually, so far as to attain a standing in the Visible Church; for they are labourers in the Vineyard of the Lord, and hired labourers there; but there are but a *few elect*. So that according to Christ, of the vast multitudes of visible Professors, called from the profession of false Religions to the owning of the true, there are but a few called from *Sin* to true *Holiness*. Christ's visible Kingdom is full of *Offenders*, *Matth.* 13. 40, 41. and 'tis the work of *Angels* by special Commission, not *Men*; in the latter end of the World, not *Now*; exactly to sever the *godly* from the *wicked*, the *regenerate* from the *unregenerate*.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, *Eccleſia non judicat de occultis*, was once the ſaying of Mr. *Cotton*, *The Church doth not judge of hidden things. Real holineſs* is only Gods judgment: *The Lord knoweth who are* his, not *Mens*, therefore cannot be the Rule for Goſpel Miniſters, who are but *Men.*

Mr. *Cotton* confeſſeth, *Let a Miniſter uſe as much diligence as he can, through the dimneſs of diſcerning, through humane frailty and the ſubtilty of Hypocrites, they may miſjudge ninety nine times in a hundred.* *Holineſs of Church-Membership.p.67.*

How irrational a thing then is it to imagine, that *Jeſus Chriſt* hath left his Church ſuch a Rule to go by, upon which, when his Miniſters and People practiſe with the greateſt care, they ſhall yet ſo ſtrangely ſhoot at Rovers.

Seventhly, Admiſſion into the Church is a publick act of the Keys, as well as Excommunication; in the due exerciſe whereof the Intereſt of the whole Church is concerned. How incongruous then is it to right Reaſon, that this publick act ſhould be exerciſed by an arbitrary, uncertain Rule; which, when applied to particulars, ſhall be made either wider or narrower, according to the ſtraitneſs or largeneſs of the charity and private conjectures of a particular Miniſter, and a few private perſons.

To

To make this Argument the more considerable, let it be seriously weighed, that in the exercise of the other publick act of the Keys, called *Excommunication*, the direct opposite act to *Admission*, the Church hath a certain publick Rule to go by, namely, *open Scandal* proved by Witnesses. As for real Regeneration, or *Non*-Regeneration, That is not before the Church to judge of, that is not the point in question: 'Tis possible for a Regenerate man to fall into a Scandalous sin; but whether Regenerate, or not Regenerate, the Church judgeth not of that, but of *open Scandal* plainly proved, let the state of the party before God be what it will.

Now, as a Scandalous person is not cast out of the Church, because his *scandal* speaketh him to mans judgment unregenerate; but because *Scandalous*, abstractedly from any consideration of unregeneracy: Even so in the admission of persons into the Church, a serious profession of Faith is accepted. Not as to Men it is a sign of *real holiness* already wrought, but because, according to the Gospel, it qualifieth persons for Church-relation; and if not already really holy, by their Baptism they become Covenant holy, and bound to endeavor after real holiness, and by Church-relation put into the next way to attain to it.

Eightly,

Eighthly, A Miniſter that ſhall ſit in Judgment upon the *Spiritual eſtates* of perſons, that ſhall deſire admittance into the Church, and make his own Imaginations Judge, whether the perſons have *real grace*, as a condition of their admittance, muſt undoubtedly run into great confuſion: For firſt, they ſhall be ſure, through human frailty, aptneſs to be deceived, to take in many as bad as thoſe they refuſe; as all experience proveth. But ſecondly, they ſhall withal refuſe, and ſo greatly grieve as good as any they receive, and make ſad ſuch as God would not have made ſad.

Neither can this evil poſſibly be avoided, ſo long as men know but in part, and common experience ſpeaketh to it: How then can it be imagined, that God ſhould be the Author of ſuch a Rule, which, conſidering the quality of the Judge, muſt neceſſarily work ſo injuriouſly? *Better* (ſaith Mr. *Cotton* himſelf) *that ninety nine Hypocrites ſhould periſh by preſumption, than one humble Soul ſhould ſink under diſcouragement, or deſpair.* If ſo, then is there a neceſſity of keeping up and owning the old qualification of a Church-member, namely, *ſolemn Profeſſion* of *Faith and Baptiſm*, of which the Officers of Chriſt are able to make a certain judgment; by which, though the *Church* ſhould admit more bad

Holineſs of Church Members, p. 28.

bad persons than they in their New way, they shall be sure to take in all the good which they very often through mistakes refuse.

Ninthly, *Jesus Christ* is a King, and his *Visible Church* is his Kingdom; *Baptism* is the Badge of his Subjects, and by it persons swear Allegiance to him. Now, what Prince is there that will refuse Protection, or common Kingdom priviledges, to any that profess Subjection to the Laws, and will covenant to be faithful and loyal Subjects; considering, that in case they afterwards prove Traytors, the Law is plain to disfranchise them: which is the case of the Church.

I conclude with a worthy saying of Mr. *Baxters*;

The Door of the Visible Church is incomparably wider than the Door of Heaven, and Christ is so tender, so bountiful and forward to convey his grace, and the Gospel so free an offer and invitation of all, that surely Christ will keep no man off: If they will come quite over in spirit to Christ, they shall be welcom; if they will come but to a visible Profession, he will not deny them admittance there, because they intend to go no further, but will let them come as near as they will; and that they come no further shall be their own fault.

The

The Eighth Propoſition.

The reſt of the places of Scripture from whence the Independents *have inferred Real holineſs to be the qualification of a Goſpel Church-member, by Chriſt's Inſtitution; and that therefore Goſpel-Miniſters ſhould admit none into the Church they do not in charity judge Really gracious, they have miſtaken the true ſenſe and meaning of every one of them. They follow in order.*

A Second place of Scripture, urged by *Robinſon* for the *holineſs* of Church-Members, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the Separation, is, the 2. *Jeremiah* 21. where God is ſaid to plant the Church of *Iſrael*, *A noble Vine, Wholly a right Seed*, withal ſaith, *All true Churches, from the beginning to the end* Rob. *Juſtification of Separation.*

of

of the World, are one in nature and essential constitution; whereupon he concludeth, *that only Regenerate persons are the Matter of the Visible Church, by Christ's Institution.*

If these words [*Wholly a right Seed*] respect Persons, which is a great question, they cannot be understood of *Inwardly sanctified persons*, as *Robinson* interprets them; as if God planted the *Jewish Church* of none but such: for *Paul* the Apostle expressly telleth us, they were a mixt company; All were not *Israel* that yet were *OF it.* The Matter of that Church was the carnal Seed of *Abraham*, among whom were *Ishmael* and *Esau*, as well as *Isaac* and *Jacob.* Some few in the Church then were *born after the Spirit*, and they were persecuted by others of the Church that were *born after the Flesh, as it is now*, saith the Apostle, *Gal.* 4. speaking of the *Christian Church.* And how should the *Church* then be any other than a mixt company, considering that every Infant born of Church-parents was then as well as now a Church-member.

But, I say, if these words, *I planted thee wholly a right Seed*, were in truth to be understood of *Persons*, then they must be understood of right worshippers of the True God, in opposition to *Idolaters*; not unre-

unregenerate perſons *ſimply* ſo. And in this ſenſe 'tis true of every Individual perſon; by the conſtitution of God they were planted *wholly a right Seed*, and 'tis plain the degeneracy into a ſtrange Plant the Prophet complaineth of, was their falling away from the entire worſhip of the True God to Idolatry, playing the Harlot upon every high Hill, and under every green Tree, and ſaying to a Stock, *Thou art my Father*, and to a Stone, *Thou haſt brought me forth.* Jer. 2. 20, 23, 27.

But *Others*, as for inſtance the learned Mr. *Gataker*, expound theſe words, *Wholly a right Seed*, not of Perſons, but of God's *Ordinances*, which by *Moſes* he ſetled amongſt them when he firſt moulded them into a Church and State, which in the 9. *Nehemiah* 13. are called *right*, *true*, and *good*. Take his comment upon the whole verſe, *Jer.* 2. 21. in his own words, *Yet I had planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed*; That is, ſaith he, *I ſetled thee at firſt in a right and goodly conſtitution, both free from all Superſtitious and Idolatrous ſervices, and ſo moulded as was moſt ſeemly and ſightly.* *Engliſh Annotations on* Jer. 2. 21.

But, however theſe words, *Wholly a right Seed*, be to be underſtood, whether of the Ordinances of the Church, or the Matter of the Church, or both together, they ſerve not the purpoſe *Robinſon* urgeth them for;

for the Reasons given 'tis plain he hath mistaken the true sense and meaning of them.

A second place of Scripture is urged for the same purpose by the Catechists,

John 3. 3.

Except a man be regenerate and born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

Independent Catechism, p. 106.

From hence he concludeth, That Jesus Christ requireth *Regeneration*, as an *Indispensable* condition in a Member of his Church, a *Subject* of his *Kingdom*.

If those words, *The Kingdom of God*, had been expounded of the Kingdom of God *in Glory*, 'tis true, a man must be born again of Water and of the Spirit, in the strict sense of the Catechist, or he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Regeneration is an Indispensable condition of Membership in the Church Triumphant. The Apostle *Paul* saith expressly, *No unrighteous person shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10.

But the Catechist expoundeth those words, *The Kingdom of God*, of the Visible Church on Earth.

Now,

Now, if by Regeneration, when he ſaith it is an *Indiſpenſable* condition in a Member of Chriſt's Church, he would have been underſtood only of *Proſelytiſm* to the Chriſtian Religion, whereupon *Jews* and *Pagans* may take the name of perſons Regenerate, or New-born, as Proſelytes did in the *Jewiſh Church*, as divers learned men have obſerved: If ſo, then the Catechiſts ſenſe of the Text were true, and that *Regeneration* is an Indiſpenſable condition of a Member of Chriſt's Church; that is, that no Man, either *Jew*, *Pagan*, or *Turk*, can enter the Church of Chriſt to enjoy the priviledges of it, except they forſake their former cuſtomes, openly profeſs the Faith of Chriſt, and accept Baptiſm into his Name, which is called the *Laver of Regeneration*, *Tit.* 3. 5.

But to interpret the words, *Kingdom of God*, of the Viſible Church on Earth, as the *Catechiſt* doth; and to ſay, *Regeneration*, as it ſignifieth Real holineſs, is an Indiſpenſable condition of entring into the Church, I doubt not to ſay, 'tis wonderfully and apparently untrue, becauſe the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that ſaid theſe words, recorded by the Evangeliſt *John*, *Unleſs a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, ſaid alſo of his Kingdom or Viſible Church, recorded

corded by St. *Matthew*, that there are more persons that enter his Kingdom that are not born again (in the *Catechists* sense) than that are; for he saith, *Many* are called in thither, and take their places there, but there are but *few* Elect: So that if those words, *The Kingdom of God*, be to be understood of the Visible Church, as the *Catechist* expoundeth them, then the words *Born again*, can be understood of nothing more than *Proselytism.*

Secondly, let it be considered, that when Christ saith, *Many* are *called* into his Vineyard or Church, but *few* elect; this call of *bad* as well as *good*, is not *Accidental* by the careleſneſs or negligence of Paſtors and Church Officers, as ſome may be ready to object. No, 'tis the effect of his own mind and will, that perſons that have been *bad*, provided they confeſs their ſins, and profeſs Faith in him, and accept Baptiſm into his Name, whether they be really converted or no, ſhould be admitted into his Viſible Church, in order to being *made good*. *Matth.* 22. 9. *Go ye*, ſaith Chriſt, *into the Highways, and as many as ye ſhall find, bid to the Marriage*: and in St. *Luke*, *Go out into the Highways and Hedges, and compel them to come*. *Who?* why the *poor*, the *maimed*, the *halt*, and the *blind*; this is ſpoken of the

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ignorant Heathen-*Gentiles*; *that my House*, saith Christ, *may be filled.* And St. *Matthew* saith, that the Servants of Christ went out into the Highways and gathered together *all, as many as they found, both bad and good. Matth.*22.10.

Accordingly *John Baptist*, when the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* came to his Baptism, confessing their sins, *I baptize you*, saith he, unto *Repentance, Matth.*3.11. that is, unto a *real* Reformation. He let them into the Church by Baptism to *make* them all good, not because he thought they were all good already: Surely he thought some of them very bad rather than good, because he calleth them a *Generation of Vipers*, even when they came to his Baptism.

So that the *Catechists* error in interpreting the 3. *Jud.*3. I humbly conceive is made plain, and the falseness of his conclusion from it made manifest, namely, that *Jesus Christ requireth Regeneration, or Real holiness, as an Indispensable condition in a Member of his Church*, I think I have sufficiently proved the contrary.

A fourth place of Scripture urged by the *Independents* for their Opinion, That Real Saints are only the Matter of New Testament Churches by Christ's Institution, and to

justifie their practice of suspending Church Membership upon Real holiness, in the judgment of charity, is,

The third of *Matth.*7,8,9.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his Baptism, he said unto them, Oh generation of Vipers, *who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come, bring forth therefore* fruits *meet for Repentance: And think not to say within your selves, We have* Abraham *to our Father, for I say unto you, that God is able of these Stones to raise up Children to* Abraham.

Cotton's *Holiness of Church-Membership*.p.22, 23.

They reason thus, or to this effect, *When the generation of Vipers came to* Johns *Baptism*, John *would not admit them, but put terms upon them; that is to say*, they must bring forth fruits meet for repentance, or no entring into the visible Church by Baptism.

To this it is answered, First, though *John Baptist* called for bringing forth fruits meet for Repentance of every one that he Baptized, it is evident he did not call for that as a condition of being Baptized, and so of

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entring into the visible Church of Christ, but as a condition of their entring into *heaven*, though they were baptized. Mind the words; when *John* saw the Vipers, he said, *O generation of Vipers, who hath forewarn'd you to flee from the wrath to come: bring forth* therefore *fruits meet for repentance. Therefore, wherefore?* Why that they might escape the wrath to come, notwithstanding their admission to Church-priviledges, which they were wont unreasonably to bear upon: Not as a condition of being baptized, as the Brethren have erroneously conceived; Mr. *Cotton* of *Boston* saith, It is incredible that *John* baptized them.

But had he not been prepossessed with these new Church-way Principles, it would have been incredible to him that any one should think otherwise: Because, 2. As vers. 7. saith, These Vipers came to his Baptism; So verse 11. saith, They were Baptized by him: *I indeed baptise you with water*: speaking to these Vipers, and mark unto *Repentance*; not because those he baptized he judged really holy, but to engage them to *real holiness*: By the Covenant of Baptism, all that confessed sin, and desired Baptism, he refused none, whether they were really holy, or not holy. 3. It appeareth by the other two Evangelists, as well as this,

Cotton's Holiness of Church-Members, p. 23.

that *John* ſent not one man away that would confeſs ſin; he did not as the Brethren have thought, ſuſpend Baptiſm upon real Repentance in his charitable judgment: For *Mark* 1. 5. ſaith, *All the land of Judea and Jeruſalem, were* all *baptized of him*; And St. *Luke* tells us, *Luke* 3. 16, 21. both touching the *multitude of Vipers*; Verſ. 7. the *Publicans*; Verſ. 12. the *Soldiers*; Verſ 14. *That John baptized them* all. *Now when* all *the people were baptized*, ſaith the Text; that is all that would confeſs ſin, and deſire it, though before they had been Publicans and Vipers: and that which maketh this conſtruction of the words to ſignifie the plain and evident truth, *is* that in the whole courſe of his Miniſtry, we never read of one man, or one woman, that was refuſed Baptiſm, that deſired it. 'Tis true, we read of ſome Phariſees, that refuſed *John*'s Baptiſm, by which they rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves, *Luke* 7. 29, 30. but not that *John* ever refuſed any, or delayed any: Nor Jeſus Chriſt neither, who by his Diſciples baptized at the ſame time, as appeareth by *John* 3. compared with *John* 4. 1. provided they would confeſs ſin, and profeſs Faith. 4. 'Tis manifeſt, *John* did not think all thoſe he baptized to be really godly, or true penitents for the preſent; for preſently

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upon their Baptiſm, he diſcourſeth to them as chaff and wheat mixt together, and admoniſheth them to take heed they were not numbred amongſt the chaff of the Church, which would one day be burnt with unquenchable fire, *Mat.* 3. 12. 5. The *word Diſciple*, when the Text ſaith, *Jeſus baptized more Diſciples than John*; did not neceſſarily ſignifie a cordial Believer, but an outward Profeſſor only: For Jeſus ſaid to his Diſciples, *ſome of you believed not*, John 6. 64. Chriſt giveth the name of Diſciples and Believers to ſuch as loved the praiſe of men, more than the praiſe of God, *John* 12. 42. And to ſuch as he durſt not commit himſelf to them, for all their Faith and Diſcipleſhip; becauſe, ſaith the Text, *he knew what was in man, he knew they were rotten at the heart*, *John* 2. 23, 25. Yet he by his Diſciples, baptized them, and let them into the Church, as well as he did *Judas*. The miſtake of the Brethren from this 3d of *Matthew*, I think to be very evident, it lieth here: they have thought *John* did refuſe Baptiſm to the Vipers, and that he bid them bring forth fruits meet for Repentance, as a condition of being baptized, and entring into the viſible Church. But it is plain *John* did baptize them all, confeſſing their ſins, though he had a bad opinion of them, and therefore telleth them,

them, he baptized them unto Repentance, and admoniſheth them upon their Baptiſm to bring forth fruits meet for Repentance; not as a condition of being baptized, and entring into the Church, but as a condition of eſcaping the wrath to come, and entring *into heaven*, though *they were of the Church*, as I noted before.

Lord open the eyes of all erring upright men!

A fifth place of Scripture urged for the ſame purpoſe is,

Philip. 1. 5, 6, 7.

Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt, even as it is meet for me to think this of you all.

Cotton's Holineſs of Church-Members, p. 46.

Hence it is inferred, that all and every individual perſon of the Church were ſo qualified, that the Apoſtle thought them all really godly at admittance into the Church.

Whereas 1. The word all ought not to be underſtood of every individual perſon, for *Phil.* 1. 15. St. *Paul* ſaith, *Some brethren preacht Chriſt out of envy and ſtrife; not ſincerely, but on ſet purpoſe to add afflictions to his bonds. Others made their belly their god; gloried in their ſhame; were enemies to*

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the croſs of Chriſt, and their end would be deſtruction, Phil. 3. 18, 19. And therefore they were not all real Saints, no not in his judgment.

2. This Apoſtle in the ſecond chapter of this Epiſtle at the 21 verſe, uſeth the word *All* when he would not be underſtood univerſally; he ſaith, *All ſeek their own things, none the things of Jeſus Chriſt.* Which muſt not be underſtood of all without exception, *though of many*, as every one will preſently grant: no doubt, very many of that Church, which indeed was one of the beſt, did give the Apoſtle good ground to hope well of their ſpiritual ſtate, but not *all*.

But then 2. The inference of the Brethren is very unſound, becauſe the Apoſtle doth not declare what his judgment was at their admittance into the Church, but his preſent judgment upon experience; namely, that they partook with him of the grace of patience under afflictions, and then alſo for that he had them in his heart in ſpecial manner to pray for them, for theſe two reaſons, both mentioned in the place, and alſo mentioned as the reaſons of his good thoughts of them, he charitably preſumeth them in a good eſtate God-ward, and their likelihood to perſevere. This Text toucheth not the Apoſtles judgment of them at admittance into

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the Church, one way or other; they might be bad enough at admittance, and prove good afterward; so that this place of Scripture serveth nothing to the purpose for which it is brought.

In the *Sixth* place is urged, to prove Real Saints the Matter of the visible Church, under the Gospel.

Acts 2. 47.

The Lord added to the Church daily *such as should be saved.*

Hence is inferred, this new way of Ministers suspending Church membership, upon *real Holiness* in their judgment of charity.

Cotton's Holiness of Church Members, p. 52.

Mr. *Cotton* argueth thus: Such *and* such only *may we lawfully receive and add to the Church, whom the Lord addeth to the Church.* But the Lord addeth to the Church, *such as should be saved,* (at least in the judgment of charitable Christians) nor do we read that he received others: and therefore such and such only may we receive as additional Members to the Church, as in the judgment of charity shall be saved.

Answ. 1. 'Tis true, the Text saith, *The Lord added to the Church* daily *such as should be saved.* But as it doth not say, That *none* shall

ſhall be ſaved that were not added to the Church; ſo neither doth it ſay, that *all* that were *added* ſhould be ſaved.

Anſw. 2. Thoſe that ſhall be actually ſaved, were added to the Jewiſh Church, and ſhall God's adding to the Inviſible Church be a **Rule** for Miniſters adding to the Viſible? This ſeemeth abſurd, becauſe it is impoſſible for a Miniſter to practiſe upon ſuch a Rule, except he were able to tell who ſhould be ſaved, and who ſhould not be ſaved, as God doth.

3. Whereas this Author concludeth, That a judgment of Charity that perſons ſhall be ſaved, muſt paſs upon all before their admittance into the Church, and that becauſe the Lord admitteth none but ſuch; 'tis a great error, and the ground falſe: as I ſhall ſhew by and by. Miniſters by God's Word, for the admiſſion of Members into the Church, being a publick act of the Keys wherein the whole Church is concerned, have a *publick certain rule to go by*, that they may act in faith upon it: They proceed upon a publick judgment of *certainty*, not a *private* and *particular* judgment of *charity*: which is in effect no Rule at all, as I have proved in my ſeventh Propoſition.

4. The ground of this *concluſion* in Mr. *Cottons* Argument, is this; becauſe, ſaith he,

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we do not read that God received any others into the Church; he meaneth then, such as in the judgment of charity should be saved, which is plainly false:

1. Because, as Jesus Christ never appointed *Charity* to be A judge of any such matter to any such end; so neither do we find, that Christ or his Disciples did ever proceed in the admission of Church-members by any such Rule; they took in *all* into the Church that confessed sin, and professed faith in Christ, and desired Baptism, without any more ado. Such a question was never put at the admission of any one man into the Church, whether charity judged the party in a state of salvation?

2. Charity, in Christs Stewards, could never be so blind a Judg (if it had been a Judg) as to conclude the multitudes that came off from Judaism and Paganism to the outward profession of Christianity, to be in a state of salvation, before they entred into the Christian Church, and brought forth the fruits of true Repentance and Christian Faith, and were for some time train'd up in the School of Christ. Doth any man think that *Charity* in *John Baptist* judged all the Vipers that he baptized, in a state of salvation, before he let them into the Church by Baptism, because they confessed their sins: No,

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it is plain it did not; he put them into the *way* of ſalvation by it, but did not, either before their Baptiſm, or preſently after, judge them all in the *ſtate* of ſalvation: Therefore, that they may be freed from the wrath to come, and ſecure Heaven, he telleth them, he baptized them *unto* Repentance, and bid them bring forth fruits meet for *Repentance*: he did not look upon them, for the preſent, as compleat penitents, or having any preſent right to ſalvation.

4. And laſtly, In ſtead of God's adding none to the Church, but ſuch as in the judgment of charity, ſhould be ſaved; being meant of the viſible Church: The plain truth is, *de facto*, the Lord addeth daily *more* to the Church, that ſhall (through their own fault) be **damned**, than ſhall be *ſaved*; Chriſt himſelf telleth us ſo, that *many are called*, meaning into his Vineyard, but there are but a few elect. And that they are called in thither, by his own order and approbation, I have ſhewed already from *Mat.* 22. 9. 10. and though Chriſt in the day of Judgment will expoſtulate with all Church-Members, that live and die without the Wedding-garment of true holineſs; **how** and *wherefore* they came into the Lord's Feaſt, not having on the Wedding-garment? and their Judgment will be far the ſeverer, for abuſing

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the grace of God. Yet those words in the Parable carry no reflection upon the Stewards for letting them in; because who hath the Wedding-garment of true grace, and who hath not, 'tis impossible for them to know; and because their positive order from Christ, was and is to invite *good* and *bad*; and as soon as they came to profess faith in Christ, and desire Baptism into his Name, to admit them into the Church without any more ado. So that this exercising a Judgment of Charity, whether persons shall be saved, as a condition of admission into the Church, I doubt not to say, 'Tis a meer humane Invention, a piece of Will-worship, A Practice not only beside the Word, but quite contrary to it.

The seventh place urged for the same purpose is,

John 4. 23, 24.

The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth: For the father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Ans. 1. This Text telleth us a great truth, but the Brethrens Inference from it is far wide: 'Tis true, God is a Spirit, and they that

that worſhip God acceptably muſt worſhip him in Spirit. But how doth it follow from hence, that Jeſus Chriſt hath made a new order, that his Miniſters ſhall go a new way in the admiſſion of Church-Members? That now they ſhall ſit in judgment of the real grace of every man that they admit to communion, and that ſuch, and ſo many as they in the judgment of charity ſhall think really holy, they ſhall admit; and them whom they think not really holy, they ſhall not admit into the Church: This doth not follow in the leaſt.

2. Let it be conſidered, this was no new Doctrine taught now by Chriſt, that was never taught in the Church before: of old, as well as now, God was a Spirit, and would be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth; for God commanded all his ſervants to love and ſerve him, with all the heart, and all the ſoul, and all the ſtrength, *then* as well as *now*: and when any worſhipper preſented his body, and left his heart behind him, God bitterly complaineth of it, *Iſa.* 29. 13, 14. *This people draw nigh to me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* By the Prophet *Ezekiel* he complaineth, *With their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart is gone after their covetouſneſs*, Ezek. 33. 31.

Cotton's *Inf. Bap.* p. 35.

3. 'Tis true, ſaid Mr. *Cotton*, once, to the like Objection; 'Tis ſaid, God ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him as worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth, but it is not ſaid God *findeth* ſuch in every Church, much leſs *none* but ſuch; 'Tis true, by how much more ſpiritual the Goſpel diſpenſation is above the Law, by ſo much the more doth God, who is a ſpirit, expect ſpiritual worſhip of Goſpel Worſhippers; and the more and the greater is the ſin, and will be the puniſhment of the Goſpel Worſhippers, if it be not vouchſafed him; becauſe, where much is given, much is required. This I humbly conceive to be the genuine ſenſe of the words, and the ſubſtance of what is contained in them.

Here is nothing to infer the Brethrens concluſion, That the Miniſters of the Goſpel muſt ſuffer none to come into the Church, but ſuch as they ſhall judge in charitable diſcretion to be godly; or that they ſhould ſit in judgment of the real grace of any one, as a condition of entring into the Church.

The

The Eighth place of Scripture urged to the ſame purpoſe is,

Acts 8. 37. The words of *Philip* to the *Eunuch*, who ask'd, *What hinder'd that he might not be baptized?* Philip *anſwereth*, *If thou believeſt with all thy heart thou may'ſt.*

Hence ſome infer, *That real Saints are only fit matter for the Church*: Alſo a preſcription to all the Miniſters of the Goſpel, *Not to admit any into the Goſpel-Church by Baptiſm, that ſhall not be judged really holy in the judgment of charity.*

But this conſequence is not good: For, firſt, The Faith that *Philip* called for, was only a faith that *Jeſus was the Chriſt*, of which the Evangeliſt had inſtructed him, *Acts* 8. 35. from the Prophet *Iſaiah*. A Faith, which alone will not argue a perſon in a Regenerate ſtate, till it hath wrought ſo effectually by love to God and Man, that it maketh the perſon a new Creature. The Devils believed that, and owned it, *Matth.* 8.29. And the *Phariſees* believed it, *John* 12.42. but were unrenewed ſtill; *for they loved the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God.* Notwithſtanding,

Secondly, Though *Philip* called for faith with all the heart, as that which would make him the better Chriſtian; yet not as an indiſpenſable condition of his baptizing him; becauſe God only knoweth the heart. It was impoſſible for *Philip* to know, whether he believed with all the heart, or but half the heart; and therefore it cannot be ſuppoſed, that he called for believing with all the heart as a condition of baptizing him.

3. Though *Philip* called for faith with all the heart, he accepted his bare profeſſion. That he did believe *Jeſus* to be the *Son of God*, without ſo much as his affirming that he did it with all his heart, that we read.

Fourthly, Upon his bare profeſſion he baptized him preſently, without taking time to conſider of his Spiritual ſtate, whether he was really holy in the judgment of *charity* firſt, as the manner of ſome is. And though it be true, that in the *Eunuch*'s caſe are ſome tempting circumſtances to think very well of his Spiritual eſtate; yet it is very plain by the way of this very *Evangeliſt*, that he did not make *that* the ground of baptizing him, and ſo letting him into the Church, but his open profeſſion of faith, that *Jeſus* was *the Son of God*; upon which he baptized the very Sorcerer himſelf, *Simon Magus*,

Magus, with the whole people of *Samaria*, who, upon *Philip*'s preaching Christ to them, 'tis said, *With one accord they gave heed, and when they believed* (which is affirmed of wicked *Simon* as well as any of the rest) *they were all as one man baptized, both Men and Women.* He took all that professed faith in the Name of *Christ*, that he had taught them; without exercising any judgment *one* way or *other* upon their Spiritual estate; whether they were really holy or no, that we know of, the Text saith no such thing, much less that he exercised any such judgment by Divine precept, and that it should be a law for all Ministers so to do, to the end of the World; which is the Brethrens conclusion from the premisses, but a groundless presumption.

In the Ninth place, to prove *Real Saints* the matter of the visible Church under the New Testament, is urged

The 1 *Peter* 2.5.

Ye also as lively Stones are built up a Spiritual house.

From whence they reason thus, or to this effect, *The house of Christ under the Gospel is*

a Spiritual house; A holy Priesthood, appointed to offer up spiritual Sacrifices: the Members therefore the Apostle calleth, lively *Stones, that they may be fit for this building. The Stewards of Christ's House must therefore take care, they lay no Stones in this building, but such as in the judgment of* charity *are lively.*

Answ. 1. This is *really* true of some few Members, they are lively stones in the Spiritual building of the Church; but so it was of old as well as now: but 'tis not true of *All.* It cannot be true of the close Hypocrites of the Church, nor the Infants, nor can it be true of the loose Professors. This Apostle, in his second Epistle, foretelleth of *some* Church-members that should have their *hearts* exercised with covetous practices, their *eyes* full of Adultery, and that could not cease from sin. Others, presumptuous, self-willed, despisers of Government, and that should count it pleasure to Riot in the day; for which, though the Apostle calleth them *Children*, he addeth, *cursed Children.*

The Church of *Sardis* was a Spiritual house to offer up Spiritual sacrifices, the Objectors cannot deny it, yet there were but
Rev. 3. 1, 4. a few *living Names* in it; there were but a few lively stones in that building in the strictest sense of the Brethren.

Secondly,

Secondly, 'Tis true of all the Members of the Church, that they are *lively* by the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and the Baptiſmal Covenant; ſo that they are *all* ſo by right, they *all* ought to be ſo, if they be not ſo they contradict their profeſſion, and break Covenant with God. Scripture uſeth to affirm perſons to *be* and to *do* what they *ought* to *be* and to *do*, though they for the preſent *are* not what they ought to be, nor *do* not what they ought to *do*.

Thus God ſaith of the houſe of *Iſrael*, *My People* will *not lie*. Being God's people, they were in Covenant with him to be men of holineſs and of truth; but for all this, in Actions the Prophets complain of them for lying and deceit. And the ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* that ſaith, *My people will not lie*, complaineth preſently of their Rebellion againſt God, and vexing his holy Spirit. Iſai. 63. 8, verſe 10.

Thus in the New Teſtament the Apoſtle *Paul* telleth the *Coloſſians*, They were *riſen with Chriſt*, and that they had *put off the Old man with his deeds, and put on the New man*; not that they had all actually done it, for verſes 8, 9. he exhorteth them to do it, *Seeing ye have put off the Old man with his deeds*, ſaith he, *lie* not *one to another: And put off anger, wrath, malice, blaſphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth*; but though Coloſſ. 3, 8, 9.

they had not all yet actually put off the Old man, yet because by the holiness of their Christian profession they ought to do it, and by the Baptismal Covenant they were all bound to do it, Scripture saith, they *had* put off the *Old man with his deeds.*

Thirdly, All Gospel-Church-members take the name of *lively* and *spiritual* from the superabundant Means vouchsafed by God in the Gospel to make them so, whether *really* and indeed they prove *so*, or *no.*

'Tis ordinary in Scripture to affirm things done, when the Means is in being that is apt to effect them, although the effects be never brought to pass. *I have purged thee*, saith the Lord to the house of *Israel*, *but thou wast not purged.* And *Capernaum* is said to be lift up into Heaven, *Matth.* 11.20. because of the abundance of Christ's *Miracles* done there, which in conjunction with his heavenly Doctrine and pure Example, were altogether abundantly sufficient to convince that he was the Son of God, the true Messiah, who being believed and obeyed, would have lift up and lodged *Capernaum* in heaven; but through *unbelief* and *disobedience* they were like to be thrown down into Hell.

Ezek.24. 13.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, When the Apoſtle ſaith, *We alſo as lively ſtones are built to a ſpiritual houſe*, this Text doth not ſhew *de facto*, what they all were, but what they ſhould be, provided they fulfilled the condition, and is true properly of no more than did ſo: He affirmeth it upon a condition, and the condition is expreſſed verſe the fourth, that they *come* to Chriſt by faith and obedience; *To whom*, ſpeaking of Chriſt, *coming as unto a living ſtone, ye alſo*, ſaith he, *as lively ſtones are built up a ſpiritual houſe, a holy Prieſthood, to offer up Spiritual ſacrifices acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* Juſt as the Lord ſpeaketh to the old Church, *Exod.* 19.5. *Now therefore, if you will obey my voice, and keep my Covenant, then ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure to me above all people: and ye ſhall be to me a kingdom of Prieſts, and a holy Nation.*

Fifthly and laſtly, The old Church, in their mixt condition of good and bad, have as high Titles as theſe, *Deuteronomy* 7.6. *Deut.* 14.2. and *Deut.*32.9.

For thou art a holy people *unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath choſen thee to be a ſpecial people unto himſelf, above all people that are upon the face of the whole earth.* Deut.7.6.

The

Deut.14. 1,2. *The whole house of Israel.* God first owneth himself to be their God, and they his people; then to be their *Father*, and the *Church* his *Children*; and to be a *holy people* unto the Lord God, chosen to be a peculiar people unto himself.

Deut.32. 9. *For the Lords* portion *is his* people, *Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.*

Here he owneth them for his people, portion, and inheritance. And in the 3. *Jer.* 14. he owneth the Church for his wife, and himself her husband, though she was wicked. *Turn oh backsliding Children, for I am married to you, saith the Lord.* And in the 26. of *Leviticus* 11. verse, *He said he would set his Tabernacle among them*; and verse 12. he promiseth his special presence there, *I will walk among you, and will be your God.*

Let it be considered, there is no style so high given to the Churches of the New Testament, but there were and are *as* high given to the Churches of the Old Testament, and almost in the same words: and why should it be wondred at, since the Church then and now, make but one *Church* under the same Covenant of Grace, though under a different dispensation; but their qualifications were as low as their appellations, by reason their Covenant-relation to God raised them high.

I

I conclude, If there was no arguing from such Appellations and high Titles to the real holiness of all the old Church-professors, or to the Ministers judging of the real grace of every Professor, before admission into the Church, as is evident there was not; no more may we now under this Gospel do so, neither therefore doth the Text, nor any other that speaketh of the high styles given to Gospel-Churches, do Dissenters any service, because they are all misinterpreted, as I have shewn.

The Tenth place of Scripture urged to the same purpose is,

Psalm 50. 16.

But unto the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to do to take my Covenant into thy mouth, since thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

From this place Mr. *Hooker* reasoneth thus, *Those who hate to be reformed, and cast away God's Commands, God professeth, they have nothing to do to take his Covenant into their mouth.* From thence concludeth, *If any such be in the Church, they should be cast out.* And for the same reason, *such* should not be taken into the Church; nor any but visible

Hooker's *Survey*, p. 18.

visible Saints, which in their strict sense of the word *Saints* signifie only, *really holy persons in the judgment of charity.*

Answ. First, God doth not here profess, wicked men have nothing to do to take God's Covenant into their mouth, simply and absolutely, for then being wicked, would free men from the duty of professing Christianity, he only expostulateth with some notoriously scandalous persons in the Church, what *they* have to do, to take his Covenant into their mouth, upon such terms as they took it, that is, boasting of the priviledges of it, while at the same time they lived in the open breach of the precepts of it, as if the Covenant were unconditional. God would have all such abusers of Religion know, that their outward Church-priviledges would stand them in no stead.

This I humbly conceive to be the true and only scope of the place; and that as this place was never intended for any Rule for Church-Officers to go by, in Admission of Church-members: so neither do I believe can any such Rule be rationally deduced from it.

But however the Authors Argument faileth in the foundation, it standeth upon a supposition, That there is the same reason of keeping all men (not really holy in the judgment

ment of charity) from coming into the Church, that there is of casting hardned, incorrigible Covenant-breakers *out* of the Church (for 'tis of such that this Text speaketh.)

But this is a great Error; there is not the same Reason, first, Because before admittance into the Church persons have not been tried as the *other* were: They never entred Covenant with God to be holy, as the other *did*, and shamefully broke it. They have not enjoyed the Means of Grace in such plenty as the other did, and basely abused.

But besides all this (and 'tis home to the point) By the positive order of Christ all Discipled persons, that is, all that have learnt his Religion, and seriously profess Faith in him, ought to be let into the Church by Baptism, if they desire it, *Matth.* 28. 19. 20. without any delay, whether they were really holy or no (which God alone can tell) accordingly they were so in Christ's and the Apostles days, as all the Examples of Scripture prove, which have been often taken notice of.

Thirdly, The *visible* Church in all Ages, hath been a place of conversion from sin to holiness within the Church, as well as a place of edification from one degree of *grace* to another.

another. Divers of the Separation themſelves in their Writings confeſs, they were converted in the communion of the Church of *England*.

To conclude then, Though it be duty to put all Notoriouſly ſcandalous impenitent Covenant-breakers *out* of the Church, it doth not therefore follow, that all perſons not really holy in the charitable judgment of a particular Miniſter and People, ſhould be kept from coming into the Church. As the firſt is a great duty, ſo the laſt is a great ſin; becauſe ſuch perſons qualified as the Goſpel requireth and approveth, ſhall be kept out of the Church by the errors and humane inventions of men, and the Commandments of God made void by mens Traditions.

In the Eleventh place, Mr. *Hooker* to prove Real Saints *only*, Members of a Church, argueth from the Church being the *body of Chriſt*, thus, or to this effect.

Mr. Hooker of New England, Survey, p. 15.

The Members of Chriſt's body are fit alone to be Members of a true Church, becauſe that *is the body of Chriſt.*

But only viſible Saints (in the judgment of charity) *are only Members of Chriſt's*

Christ's body; *because they only have some virtual Influences of some spiritual operation from Christ* as a Head. *Without which*, he concludeth, *persons cannot be called Members of Christ's* body, *because 'tis against reason, and that reference and correspondence which the Members have to the Head.*

Answ. First, This Argument supposeth Gospel Church-Members must be real Saints, not only in a judgment of *charity*, but *verity*, because none but such have the virtual Influences and Spiritual operations from Christ the Head, nor none but such can maintain that reference and correspondence with the *Head*, which this Argument speaketh of.

And secondly, Suppose *charity* in the Minister and People judge an hypocrite or wicked man to be a visible Saint, as Mr. *Cotton* telleth us, it may misjudge even Ninety nine times in a hundred, will an Hypocrite be ever the better man for having a judgment of charity pass upon him to be a real Saint, when in truth he is not so? Will that false judgment make him draw Influences from Christ, or make him fitter to maintain that reference and correspondence, which the Members have to the Head? Surely it

cannot,

cannot. To what purpose then is such a judgment?

Secondly, 'Tis true, that only visible Saints are Members of Christ's body; that is to say, only baptized persons into Christ, Professors of saving Faith, and their Infants. But then, *such*, and all *such*, take the Name of visible Saints in Scripture, as I have proved at large, because they are separated from the *Heathen* and *Jewish* world, are consecrated for God's use, and dedicated to him, and so are Covenant holy; and upon that account Scripture reckoneth them Members of the Church, and of Christ's body; even such as are not really holy, as well as those that are: Even such in the Church of old, as *hated instruction*, and *cast God's word behind their backs*, took the name of *Saints* from their Covenant-relation to God. *Psal.* 50. 5. *Gather my* Saints *together*, saith God: Who were they? why the next words give their character, they are they that entred into Covenant with him by Sacrifice.

Thirdly, Whereas this Argument saith, *It is against reason to affirm any one can be accounted a member of Christ's body, that doth not participate of some virtual influences and operations from Christ the Head, and that cannot maintain that reference and correspondence*

dence, which the Members have to the Head.

Answ. Why may not Christ be said to be a *Head* to dead Members, as well as a *Vine* to *dead* branches. *Dead fruitless* branches are said to be in Christ, as well as lively and fruitful. *John* 15.2. *Every branch* in me, saith Christ, *that bringeth not forth fruit.* Christ owneth it, that *dead fruitless* branches may be *in him*, or joyned to him, because joyned to the visible Church, to which he is Head; and by the same reason he may be Head to Rotten members.

Fourthly, Why may not bad men in the Church now, be Members of Christ's body and Christ be their Head, as well as in the Church before Christ came in the flesh? Christ was then head and husband of the Church, as well as now. He was to his Church the same both yesterday and to day, and will be so for ever; and he then owned all men in Covenant for members of his body the Church, the *bad* as well as the good, as I have proved over and over, and owneth the Church for his Spouse, when she was very bad and wicked; as appeareth by the 3. *Jer.* 14. and 54. *Isaiah* 1.

Fifthly, The mistake of this Author lay here, he considered not sufficiently, that Christ when he is said to be Head of the visible Church, that the Metaphor is bor-

rowed from a *Civil head* and Politick body, not from a *Natural head* and *Natural body*.

Now in this ſenſe he may be ſaid to be *Head* to *bad* Members as well as good; and they Members of his body, becauſe he is Head and Governour of the whole, both good and bad. He giveth Laws to all, and by his Officers he publiſheth them, and by the Word and Spirit endeavoureth to influence all, though all are not effectually influenced by them. He hath his rewards ready for the godly, and his cenſures and puniſhments for the wicked, ſo that he may truly *be ſaid* to be *Head* over all. As a *King*, he hath *bad Subjects* as well as good. As a *Maſter*, he hath *bad ſlothful* Servants as well as *good* and *faithful*: and ſo as a *Head*, he hath unſound *members* as well as *good*.

Hooker's *Survey*, p. 16.

Object. *But Chriſt is the King of* Saints, *not* Drunkards *and Whoremongers; and thoſe only are fit to be Members of his Church, that are Subjects in his kingdom.*

Anſw. Firſt, Jeſus Chriſt is King, not only of real Saints, or of ſuch in the judgment of charity, but of all men good and bad, I, and Devils too. God the Father hath

hath put *all* things under his feet. He hath committed all judgment to him. He hath given him a Name above every name, That at the Name of *Jesus* every knee ſhould bow, both of things in heaven, earth, and under the earth.

Secondly, 'Tis true, Drunkards and Whoremongers are bad, diſobedient Subjects; but if they be baptized, profeſſors of faith in Chriſt, they cannot be denied to be Subjects in Chriſt's kingdom: They are under the Oath of Allegiance to be loyal Subjects. Their Rebellion doth not make them ceaſe to be Subjects, but only maketh them ceaſe to be faithful, loyal, and good Subjects.

Thirdly, There is no oppoſing *Saints*, as the word *Saint* is applied to the viſible Church, to *Drunkards* and *Whoremongers*, becauſe ſuch were in the Church, both in the Old Teſtament and in the New, and held the Name of Saints notwithſtanding.

Even in the Churches of the Apoſtles own planting, the Inceſtuous *Doctor* in the Church of *Corinth* was worſe than a Whoremonger, and yet a Saint and a Brother. So were the Drunkards in the Church of *Corinth*, that came drunk to the Lord's Table. All that called upon the Name of the Lord Jeſus: All that took the Chriſtian way in oppoſition to Judaiſm and Paganiſm; *Simon Magus* as well

as *Simon Peter*, did take the name of *Saints* and *Disciples* of the Lord expressly; in the 9. of *Acts* 1,2,3,13. compared; as I have upon the like occasion often noted, and given the Reasons. For which Reasons, among others, I suppose it was that Mr. *Cotton*, when he writ his Book of *Infant Baptism*, said, Saint *Demas*, and Saint *Judas*; and that Churches of *such* were Churches of Saints.

And though it be true, all such notoriously wicked prophane persons ought to be cast out of the Church, it doth not thence follow, that none ought to be taken *into* the Church, but such as are in the judgment of charity really holy persons, for the Reasons formerly given; which yet is the Inference, that all that have gone into this new Church-way, have been wont to make from the premisses. I doubt not to say, Though they were never so good men, neither their goodness nor their learning, hath delivered them from a great mistake.

In

In the Twelfth place: The *Catechiſt*, to prove effectual Calling to conſtitute Goſpel Church-members, ſaith,

> *That 'tis ſignified by the* Typical holineſs *of the Church of Old, in the room whereof* Real holineſs *was to ſucceed under the Goſpel.* *Catechiſm*, p. 106.

To prove this ſtrange Propoſition, he urgeth 19. *Exod.* 6. and abundance of other places; but he doth not tell us how to infer his concluſion from any one of them, neither do I believe he ever will or can.

Firſt, Becauſe there are not many things more plain from Scripture, than that the holineſs of Church members, both under the Old Teſtament and the New, is *one* and the ſame by Divine inſtitution.

1. Becauſe no Proſelyte of old was admitted into the Church, no more than now under the Goſpel, before he took hold of the Covenant, to *love the Name of the Lord*, and *ſerve him*, *Iſaiah* 56.6. And how he would be loved he telleth us, *Deut.* 6. 5. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength.* And ſurely, whoever kept this Covenant, were as really holy perſons, as any can be

found in the pureſt Goſpel-Church in the world.

St. *Peter* telleth us of ſome holy *Women of old who truſted in God*, whoſe *adorning was in the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible*; and whoſe moſt holy and excellent Example he ſetteth before the Chriſtian Women for their imitation. Yea, God ſet his own Holineſs before the Church then for their Pattern, and commandeth them to imitate it, *Be ye holy, as I am holy*. Therefore the holineſs of Church-members *then* was not a Typical holineſs, but as *Real* as now under the New Teſtament, by divine inſtitution.

Heb.4. 1. Gal.3.14. Secondly, The Goſpel was preach'd to the Church of old, though not ſo plainly as now under the New Teſtament. The Church then and now, *was* and *is* under the ſame Covenant of grace for ſubſtance (though the Seals be changed) the Promiſes and conditions of the Covenant were and are the ſame, though the Promiſes were not then ſo plainly and particularly revealed, the general promiſe of Gods being *their* God, did infer pardon of ſin, and heaven it ſelf, 11. *Heb.* 16. The conditions were *Repentance from dead works*, *Iſaiah* 55. 7. *and* Faith *towards God*. *Habakuk* 2. 3. *The juſt man ſhall live by his Faith.*

As

As no Proſelyte then could enter the Church, that did not *covenant* to be really holy; ſo 'tis certain, no man could enter into heaven without *real* holineſs, no more *then*, than *now*. Therefore the holineſs of Church-members then, was not a Typical holineſs of any thing; but as Real to all intents and purpoſes, by divine Inſtitution, as the holineſs of Church-members *now*, under the Goſpel.

Thirdly, I have read of *Jacob*'s Ladder, being a type; and Circumciſion and the Paſsover, being a type; and the pillar of Cloud and Fire, being a type; and their paſſing through the Red Sea; the Brazen Serpent; the Jubilee; the Temple; and of ſome other *things* and perſons, being Types: As, *Adam*, *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, *Sampſon*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Jonah*, *Melchiſedeck*, and ſome others: but never read or heard before of the holineſs of Church-members being a Type of any thing, nor I believe any one elſe.

Fourthly, I cannot but take notice, that though Mr. *Robinſon*; the old rigid Separatiſt, agreeth with the *Catechiſt*, That *Real Saints only are the Matter of the viſible Church*, yet he never thought of any difference between the holineſs of the Church-members under the Old Teſtament and the

New, by Divine inſtitution. No, he was ſo far from it, that he urgeth the 2. *Jeremy* 21. to prove the Church of old to be conſtituted of only Real Saints, and ſaith, *The viſible Church is one in Nature and Eſſential conſtitution, from the beginning to the end of the World, and the firſt the Rule of the reſt*; as I have obſerved before.

So far was he from thinking the holineſs of the old Church-members, to be a Typical holineſs only.

In the Thirteenth place, 'tis urged again from the

2 *Timothy* 3. 5.

Having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof, from ſuch *turn away.*

Therefore ſaith Mr. *Cotton*;

Cotton's *Holineſs of Church-Membership.* p. 72.

'Tis according to the will of God, and the counſel of the Apoſtle, not to receive ſuch *into the fellowſhip of our Churches, but to turn away from them.*

Anſw. 1. This Argument faileth again, through an unjuſt compariſon between perſons ſimply unregenerate, and ſuch deniers of the power of godlineſs, as this Text

ſpeaketh

ſpeaketh of: They were *Traytors*, *Blaſphemers*, *unclean perſons* within the Church, that had impenitently broke Covenant with God; which is not the caſe of all unregenerate perſons, nor indeed can be the caſe of any that have not had the ſame priviledge of being admitted into the Church, and taken the oath of Allegiance to the Lord Jeſus by Baptiſm, as they did, and broke it, as they did. So that there is no arguing from the Apoſtles bidding *Timothy* to turn away from *ſuch* as theſe, to the turning away from all perſons not regenerate, in the judgment of charity; and not ſuffering ſuch to enter into the Church, for theſe and other Reaſons given, upon the like occaſion.

I have now done conſidering the principal places of Scripture, that *Independent* Authors have urged for their New Opinion, That *Real Saints are now the only* matter *of viſible Churches by divine Inſtitution*; and, I hope, have ſufficiently diſcovered their error in Interpreting them, which I ſubmit to judgment. I now proceed to ſhew their error touching the Form of particular Churches, as well as the Matter.

The

The Ninth Propoſition.

That voluntary particular Covenanting, is not that which formeth or giveth Being to a particular viſible worſhiping Church, as is affirmed.

THe miſtaken Brethren, that they may the better juſtifie their ſeparation from the Pariſh Churches; cry up their own ſeparated Churches, as truly conſtituted, and cry down the Pariſh Churches, as Churches of a falſe Conſtitution; and when they are beaten from their exceptions againſt the Matter of them, they run to the Form; from which two, *Robinſon* ſaith, the Church riſeth, and is conſtituted. Their error touching the Matter is already diſcovered; touching the Form, they affirm that particular mutual Covenanting, is that which formeth, or giveth Being to a viſible Church. I'le prove the contrary, and thus I argue.

If a particular viſible worſhipping Church may

may be without any ſuch voluntary mutual Covenanting; then ſuch Covenanting doth not form, or give Being to the Church: But a particular viſible worſhipping Church may be without ſuch Covenanting. *Ergo*:

For the clearer manifeſtation of the truth of the minor Propoſition, That a particular viſible worſhipping Church may be without any ſuch particular Covenanting: And ſo to cut the throat of the objection againſt the conſtitution of our Pariſh Churches, wherein is more than what is neceſſary to the ſimple being of a particular viſible worſhipping Church, as I ſhall ſhew.

We will firſt conſider, A particular viſible worſhipping Church in the ſimple eſſence of it; And 2. In a better or more compleat ſtate of it; and it will appear, that ſuch mutual Covenanting, as the Brethren boaſt of, is none of the Form, whether we look on a Church in its low, or better eſtate.

Firſt, Let us look upon a particular viſible worſhipping Church, in the ſimple eſſence of it; and here for the clearer diſcovery of the truth touching the Form, 'tis neceſſary to deſcribe ſuch a Church in this firſt notion: 'Tis in plainneſs, a company of open viſible Profeſſors of ſaving Faith in Jeſus Chriſt, aſſembled or congregated to worſhip God in Chriſt. No body can deny, but

that

that whereever such a Congregation is though naked, without Officers, Sacraments or Censures; there is a true visible worshipping Church of Christ, though incompleat.

For 1. Their visible Congregating, giveth them the name of a visible Church; for that the word Church belongeth to every Congregation, bad as well as good, and is equally applied both to prophane and religious Assemblies, neither lawfully assembled nor united. *Acts* 19. 32. *Psal.* 6. 5.

Then 2. Their visible assembling to worship God in Christ, giveth them the name of a visible worshipping Church of Christ, and distinguisheth them from Pagan, Jewish, and Mahometan Churches. Now such an Assembly or Church may meet by accident, command of Authority, as well as by mutual Covenanting; and therefore mutual Covenanting doth not form or denominate such a Church, to be a particular visible worshipping Church: That which formeth, or giveth being to a Church, it can no more be without it, than a living man can be without life. It is not therefore mutual Covenanting that giveth being to the Church in this sense, because the Church may be without it; but visible congregating and worshipping Christ is the Form, without which it could not take the name of such a Church.

Secondly,

Secondly, Let us consider such a Church Organized, which is a better state of a Church. A Church in the possession of Officers, Sacraments and Censures; in which are Officers cloathed with Power, and under the trust of governing and feeding it, and the people under the duty of obedience and submission; I say again, particular mutual Covenanting is none of the Form of such a Church, because Officers to a people, and a particular people to one another, may enjoy and stand charged with such a special relation without mutual Covenanting; mutual Covenanting therefore doth not form or denominate such a Church, nor is it an essential Cause thereof, as the Brethren assert. For demonstration whereof, I must do two things; First, I must prove that Church-Officers may have Pastoral Authority over persons that never chose them, nor covenanted with them: 2. That people may stand in a special Church-Relation to one another, without mutual, particular, voluntary Covenanting. The relation of Pastors and People was formerly wrought fully and absolutely, by the special appointment of God, without peoples chusing or covenanting; and although it be said, the Churches gave themselves to God, and to the Apostles by the will of God; there is not the least hint of any particular

cular Covenant between them: There giving themselves to the Apostles conduct, is acknowledged as the fruit of the Apostles ministry to them, not as the formal cause of their authority over them; for *that* they had not of man, nor *by* man, but *God* only. Now for the first; That Church Officers may have Pastoral Authority over persons that never chose them, nor made any Covenant with them:

1. This is true, not only of *John Baptist*, the Apostles and Evangelists, who had their Pastoral Authority, not of man, nor by man, but the Lord.

But 2. 'Tis true of common Elders also; the Elders of *Ephesus* are said to be made Overseers of the Lords Flock by the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 20. without the peoples Covenanting with them. Neither is there any Precept for, or any Example of such particular mutual Covenanting, of a particular people to create Office Power, neither in the New, nor in the Old Testament; and yet Elders then had ruling Power, and were over the people, and people bound to submit to them by divine Precept; and therefore Officers may have Pastoral Power without it.

Object. I know it is Objected, *That people chose and ordained their Pastors in the Primitive times, and that Election in the Co-*

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crete implieth the acceptation of the call on the Elders part.

Answ. 1. It can never be proved, that a major part of Common People did ever so much as chuse their Pastors in any sense; but in the Brethrens sense 'tis absurd to think it. I distinguish of peoples choice: 'Tis one thing for people to chuse a Minister for themselves, out of divers Ministers who have been first tried and approved by persons fit to judge of Ministerial gifts and endowments; Another thing for people to be left to themselves to try, chuse and ordain to themselves whom they please; which the Brethren maintain. The first is highly convenient, but not absolutely necessary: The last, ordinarily intolerable and absurd; because by Scripture and reason, no man is to be admitted into so great an Office, but he must be first tried whether sound in Faith; able to convince Gain-sayers: Of which common people, much less a major part of a Congregation, who are always the weakest, and the worst, are no competent Judges, little more than a blind man to judge of Colours. For popular Election of Ministers in Scripture-times, the Brethren build much upon the people being ordered to chuse Deacons; but it is unreasonable so to do, because common men can judge of the qualification of Deacons; *Answ.*

cons; they can by experience tell, who have been faithful to Truſts, who are godly, diſcreet, and charitably diſpoſed. That's enough to fit men for diſpenſing the Churches money; But to diſpenſe the Lord's Word, rightly to divide that, to defend the Church from Hereticks, to ſtop the mouth of Gainſayers, there goeth another ſort of abilities, of which common people are no competent judges; and therefore there is not the ſame reaſon. Again, they urge, and indeed chiefly inſiſt upon *Acts* 14. 23. where 'tis ſaid, *they ordained them Elders in every Church*: Some of the Brethren for popular Election, will have it, That the words *they ordained*, refer to the people; others confeſs they refer to *Paul* and *Barnabas*: But however they ſay *Paul* ordained Elders by the ſuffrages of the people. Now for anſwer:

1. 'Tis moſt unreaſonable to underſtand the words *they* ordained, of the *people*; becauſe, by the context, they are ſaid to ordain them Elders, That had preached the Goſpel at *Derbe*, *ver.* 21. that returned to *Lyſtra*, *Iconium* and *Antioch*, to confirm the ſouls of the Diſciples, *ver.* 22. That commended the Diſciples to the Lord, on whom they believed, *ver.* 24. That afterward travelled throughout *Piſidia*, and preached at *Perga*.

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All which the Context giveth to the Apoſtles, as any one may ſee: it was the Apoſtles therefore that ordained Elders to the people, not the people to themſelves. But then ſay ſome, they did ordain them Elders by the ſuffrages of the people, becauſe the Greek word for *chuſe* or *ordained* was ſo uſed then.

To this Objection divers Learned men have anſwered the Brethren over and over; particularly Dr. *Stillingfleet* in his *Irenicon.* 1. The Greek word for chuſe or ordain, is not always uſed for chuſing by ſuffrages, but ſometimes for ſimple chuſing, as *Acts* 10.41. and though the word did originally ſignifie chuſing that way, yet before the time of *Lukes* writing this, the word was uſed for ſimple deſignation, without that ceremony. Many Examples of this ſignification, are brought by Learned men, of Writers before and about the time that *Luke* wrote this from *Philo:* ſaith he, *Joſephus*, *Appion*, *Lucian* and others. So that there is no neceſſity of underſtanding the word ordained, of chuſing by ſuffrages.

Then Secondly, If *Luke* would have ſignified popular Election here; To what purpoſe doth he aſcribe chuſing to *Paul* and *Barnabas*, when the multitude choſe?

Right of High Power, p. 197.

Thirdly, we find *Paul* ordering *Titus*, to do that in other places which he did here; that was, to ordain Elders in every City, but not a word of the peoples doing it in any one Text in the Bible. Thus saith *Grotius*, *It appeareth not out of the whole History of the New Testament, that Pastors were elected by the people; in a word, 'tis without Precept, President, and notoriously contrary to all Principles of Reason.* There was therefore no such thing in Scripture-times, as peoples chusing their Pastors in the Brethrens sense. But

Fourthly (and lastly) If it were true, as they say; That in Scripture-times people chose their Ministers, and that Office-power accrued that way; this is not sufficient to prove, that chusing & covenanting giveth Being to Office-power *simply*, except they could make appear that Office-power could not be without it. *Examples* in stead of *Law* must not be urged; for many things are *rightly* done, which are not of necessity to be done: and here suppose the Church in her virgin and calm state, when all were of one heart, full of joy in God, and love to one another, might be trusted to chuse their Pastors. Will any wise man say, that a Church full of animosities, divided in affection, opinion and interests, may be of civil distractions? That

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a Church in this caſe ought to be truſted with that liberty? Surely no, for that there is not the ſame reaſon. So I have done this part of my engagement, and have proved, that particular mutual Covenanting is not abſolutely neceſſary to the Paſtoral Office. The people of the Cities of *Judah* were as well bound to hear and obey the Prieſts and Levites that *Jehoſaphat* the King ſent to teach them, as if themſelves had choſen them for that purpoſe, 2 *Chron.* 17. 7. So was the Church of *Epheſus* to hear *Tychicus*, that *Paul* ſent them, *Eph.* 6. 21. So were the Gentiles to hear the Miniſters, that to propagate the Goſpel, went forth to preach *gratis*, 3 Epiſt. of St. *John* 7.

Now Secondly, People may ſtand in a ſpecial Church-Relation to one another, mutually charged with the duty of Chriſtian Brethren in a Church-eſtate, without particular voluntary Covenanting: 'Tis true, conſent is neceſſary to comfortable *Communion* in the Relation, but I am not ſpeaking of *that*, but of the very being of the Relation it ſelf; now, *that* I ſay, may be without mutual covenanting or conſenting. This I will make good, and inſtance in our Pariſh-Church Aſſemblies: there is undoubtedly ſuch a Relation, however good men have been deceived, and ſo wofully neglected

their Duty. There are ſix things in the caſe of the Pariſh Churches, which together ſufficiently evince this Relation. For

1. There is a company of viſible Profeſſors of ſaving Faith in Chriſt, under the general Covenant of Baptiſm; ſome holy by Regeneration, all by Conſecration; whereby all Chriſtians are become bound to love the brotherhood, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. and to ſeek the common good of the whole ſociety; to that purpoſe to maintain Church-Communion with ſome particular Church, for the better advantage of doing and receiving good.

2. The particular Precept of our Saviour, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour*; taketh hold in the firſt place, of perſons that live near, for that certainly charity beginneth at home, though it doth not end there; and if neighbouring Chriſtians be leſs knowing, and leſs holy, they have the more need of ſome to do the ſervice of the Sun and ſalt to them. The Stars are not all of a heap, but ſpread all over the heavens. To a true Chriſtian Catholick ſpirit, the badneſs of a neighbourhood will be rather an argument of ſtaying among them, than ſeparating from them.

3. The Aptitude of a neighbourhood for the performance of all Brotherly duties, above

above what persons scattered and at a distance are capable of.

4. The Providential Dispose of particular persons Habitation in this neighbourhood of Christians, and not in that in which God hath a special hand: 'Tis a kind of Providential fixing the particular communion of Christians.

5. By all example of Scripture, particular Churches took their name and relation from Cohabitation: All the Christians dwelling at *Corinth*, *Ephesus* and *Colosse*; they are all called the Church of *Corinth*, the Church of *Ephesus*, the Church of *Colosse*.

6. (And lastly) That which worketh the Relation quite through, is the Command of Authority, that so it shall be for the good of Religion, and the whole Society, upon the general order of all things, being done to edification, which belongeth to the King as King. Christian Kings are to nurse the Church, *Isa.* 49. 23. To that purpose they have their work in the business of the Lord. *Robinson* confesseth there is great use of the Magistrates Power for the furtherance of the Gospel: where the supreme Magistrate hath a whole nation of Christians to see well grounded and fed, it naturally offereth it self to be his care to dispose them into parts under Officers for Order sake, to 2 Chr. 29.

avoid confuſion; and by the Baptiſmal Covenant, all particular Chriſtians are bound to obey Authority, making Laws for the general good of Religion, and the Society. From theſe ſix Conſiderations, I conclude, There is a real and ſpecial Church-Relation between Pariſh Church-Members, and they ſtand bound to vouchſafe all Church reſpects in a particular manner one towards another; for that otherwiſe they ſhall not ſhew that love to their Chriſtian neighbour that is due to them in the firſt place; They ſhall neglect the advantages of a Neighbourhood for Edification; They ſhall ſlight God's Providence, diſpoſing them to ſuch a neighbourhood of Chriſtians as that where they live; They ſhall forſake to be ruled by the pattern of God's Word, in a matter material for the good of the whole; and withal deſpiſe the Precepts of Authority in a lawful thing.

A particular people then may ſtand in a ſpecial Church-Relation, mutually charged with the duty of Chriſtian Brethren, in a Church-State, without particular voluntary Covenanting: Refuſing to joyn with a Pariſh Church, doth not annihilate the Relation, but increaſe the guilt of not performing the duty of it. So I have done both parts of my Engagement; from whence it followeth,

followeth, That mutual particular Covenanting between Paſtor and particular people, and people one with another, is not that which Formeth, or giveth Being to a Viſible Church; whether we conſider a particular viſible worſhipping Church in the firſt notion of it, in its deformity, without Officers, Sacraments and Cenſures, or in a better ſtate poſſeſſing Officers.

The Tenth Propoſition.

The Brethrens Arguments for mutual and particular Covenanting's forming the Viſible Church, are not ſound.

NOW that the error of the Brethren, making their particular Church-covenant to form the viſible Church may be the more manifeſt, and that it may no longer be a ſnare to godly Souls, I will firſt ſhew the Brethrens miſtakes in arguing for it; and ſecondly, diſcover the pernicious Conſequences of it.

Firſt, I will diſcover (by God's help) the Miſtakes of the Brethren in arguing for it.

Thus they Argue:

Arg. 1. 1. *It was the way of God of old, to enter all perſons into a Church eſtate by way of Covenant.* For this is urged *Gen.* 17. 7. *Exod.* 19. 15. *Deut.* 29. 10, to 13. *Iſai.* 56. 3.

All

All Proſelytes before they entred the Church, took hold of the Covenant.

1. Theſe Scriptures ſpeak of the peoples Publick covenanting with *God*, not of Private covenanting of a particular people *one* with *another*, and therefore irrelative to the Point. *Anſw.*

2. It is not denied, but at the firſt entrance of a people into the *Catholick Church*, 'tis the way of Scripture to bring all the Members to take hold of the Covenant, that is, the Covenant between God and his Church, ſpecified, *Gen.* 17. *Iſai.* 56. 4.

And as it was the way of God and the Church of old, ſo it is now with us. For, that no man is ordinarily reckoned a compleat Member of the *Catholick Church*, having right to all Ordinances, till he take hold of the ſame Covenant of the Church of old; and all Proſelytes did, mentioned *Iſai.* 56. 4. The *Covenant* is the ſame ſtill, though the Seal be changed from *Circumciſion* to *Baptiſm*.

The Church of *England*, and every Pariſh, are a Church and Churches of *Covenanters* in the ſame ſenſe, to all intents and purpoſes, as the *Church of Iſrael* was, and the *Synagogue Aſſemblies* were; for that they are all *Baptized* perſons, as the Church of old were *Circumciſed* perſons.

Now

Now, if the Brethren would make out any thing from Scripture to justifie their Opinion, *That a particular visible Church cannot be, without mutual and particular Covenanting*, they must shew where God hath appointed two Covenants; one general, to form the *Catholick Church*, another particular, to form *particular Congregations*; which is impossible. 'Tis indeed said, *Except ye be Circumcised, ye shall not eat the Passover*: So with us, *Except persons be Baptized, they are not admitted to the Lord's Supper.* Publick covenanting with God goeth before Church-communion, both in the Old and New Testament.

Exod. 12. 48.

But as for Private covenanting, and that of necessity to form or give being to a *particular Church*, or a lawful use of Ordinances, 'tis without all precept or president. 'Tis so far from being true, that the first open Church-communion after *Christ's* Ascension, was a communion between *Catholick Officers*, the Apostles, and *Catholick Communicants*, *Acts* 2. 44. not yet reduced into particular Congregations. The Officers were the *Apostles*, not particular *Elders* of the Church of *Jerusalem*: The Communicants were many of them men of *Galilee*, residing at *Jerusalem* for a time. The *three thousand* that were *added*, were men out of every Nation,

rion, *Acts* 2. 5. *Sojourners* coming up to the Feast, having their Families at home; some of them of *Judea*, verſ. 9. and this the Brethren cannot deny.

Again they Argue:

Without mutual covenanting, Chriſtians cannot challenge watchfulneſs from Officers nor People where they come; nor can they cenſure a Stranger, though an Inhabitant among them, without they give an Officer and People power over them. *Arg.* 2.

Another to the ſame purpoſe, thus:

If they have no power over one without this, then if they have any it is by this.

This Argument ſuppoſeth *Chriſtians* (before their Mutual covenanting) though born and baptized in the Church of God, and owning their Chriſtian profeſſion, to be yet as meer *ſtrangers* one to another, for ſo they ſay, *If a Stranger come.* But this unkind, dividing thought had never prevailed as it hath, had not the Brethren firſt loſt the faith, or at leaſt the ſenſe of theſe four Truths of Scripture. *Anſw.*

Firſt, That all the viſible Chriſtians, and Chriſtian Churches in the whole World, make but one body, to which he is head.

Epheſ.

Epheſ. 4. 4. *There is one Body. The Church, which is his Body*, *Epheſ.* 1. 23. not *Bodies.* And all particular Chriſtians are every one *members of this body, and of one another*, *Rom.* 12. 5. They are all *Brethren of one Family*, *Epheſ.* 3. 15. *Children of one Father*, 1 *Cor.* 8. To note their joynt intereſt in God, and one another, when the Children pray, they are taught to ſay, *Our Father.* They are all Servants of one Lord and Maſter; Subjects of one King; fellow Souldiers under the ſame Captain; united in the ſame God, the ſame Mediatour, the ſame Spirit, Covenant, Faith, Hope, and Baptiſm.

Secondly, The Brethren forget, that by Divine precept the Lord Jeſus (who is the Head and King of the whole) hath joyned the whole Body, whereof he is Head, firſt in *love* one to another, *John* 13. 35. ſuch an *oneneſs*, that if *one* member ſuffers, *all* the members muſt ſuffer with it; as in the Natural body. Secondly, in *care* one for another, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25. *That there be no ſchiſm in the body, but that the members have the ſame care one for another.* The Members thus charged, are the members of the *Catholick Church*, not the members of the *particular Church* of *Corinth* only; becauſe 'tis the Members of that Church, which with the Head,

Head, make Christ *mystical*, ver. 12. which *Baptism* letteth into, verse 13. which *Apostles* were set in, verse 28. Neither of which is true of any one *particular Church*, as is obvious to every common eye.

The Apostles were Catholick Officers to the *Catholick Church*; not particular fixed Elders to any one particular Church. *Baptism* letteth not into any one particular Church only, but the *Catholick Church*, which all acknowledge.

In short then, The Members of the whole Church of God on earth, stand charged by Christ, to *care one for another*; yea, the *same care* one for another, I say, the same in kind, though distance of place will not admit of the same particular applications. They that cannot meet in one Congregation to preach to, and pray with one another, can yet meet at the Throne of grace every day, praying one for another.

All Christians are bound by this charge, to take heed, not that themselves only do well, or their particular Church; but, *lest any man fail of the grace of God.* The Brethren think, if they watch over, and provide and care for so many as particularly *covenant* with them, the rest they may let sink or swim, they are not charged with them. A principle utterly contrary to the Spirit of *Christ*,

Christ, and the *Apostles*, and the *Oneness* of the Church of God. This is not to *love the Brotherhood*, but a Party.

Thirdly, As Christ hath joyned the *whole body* by Divine precept, in *love* one to another, and *care* one for another: so in *mutual endeavours* one with another, for the *propagation of the Faith. Phil.* 1.27.

Fourthly and lastly, In the communion of the Word, Prayer and Sacraments, thus to shew their *love* to, and *union* one with another, by a joynt participation in all Gospel Ordinances, as occasion and opportunity offereth, except in case of *Scandal.* 1 *Cor.* 12.13. *By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and made to drink into one Spirit.* 1 *Cor.* 10.16, 17. *We are one body*; And mark, *we are* all *partakers of that one bread.* *Luke* 2. *And he said to his Disciples, Drink ye all of this.*

Thirdly, The Brethren do not consider, That as Jesus Christ hath but *one Church*, though for the better Edification parted into several Congregations, all under a charge to *love* and *serve* one another: so all *Church Officers*, though Pastors of particular Congregations, yet stand as Pastors and Officers to the *whole*, as well as to their own particular Congregations. For they are said to be

set

ſet in that Church which *Baptiſm* letteth into, and Apoſtles were ſet in, and that is the *Catholick Church*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13, 28. and for the *edifying of the body of Chriſt*, *Eph.* 4. 12. The *one body*, verſe 4. to which *Chriſt is head*. So that their firſt relation is to the *Church Catholick*, and they take their places in *particular Congregations* only of neceſſity; becauſe all cannot poſſibly meet to be governed and edified. *Acts* 15. we read of divers *Elders* meeting with the *Apoſtles*, who made decrees binding to the *whole Church*, which could not have been, if Elders were Officers only to their own particular Congregations.

The abſurdities of the contrary Opinion, (that a Miniſter is only an Officer to his *own* particular Congregation) are ſo many, and ſo great, that they cannot lightly but be eaſily felt by every man that hath not loſt his ſenſes, or is not blinded by vehement prejudice. For then,

1. A Miniſter can perform no Paſtoral act *out* of his own Congregation.

2. To his *own* Members he preacheth as an Officer having authority; but to *others*, as a gifted man only.

3. Then a Miniſter baptizeth into his *own* particular Church only, not into the *Church Catholick*; expreſly contrary to the 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. Theſe,

These, and many more intolerable Absurdities, are justly fastned upon this Opinion by that worthy and learned Divine, Mr. *Sam. Hudson*; by which he hath made this Opinion stink in the nostrils of all Rational unprejudiced men. To which I refer the Reader *. So have the *London* Ministers.

* Hudson's *Catholick Church*, Jus divin. Min. p. 149

Fourthly, They do not consider the *extent* of the Baptismal covenant, both to persons and things.

1. To *Persons*. Baptism being into the *one body* of Christ, made up of all the Congregations on Earth, it worketh a Brotherly relation to the *whole Fraternity* all over the World; wherever baptized persons into the Name of Christ meet, there Christian Brethren in covenant meet.

2. They do not consider, nor lay to heart, the extent of the Baptismal covenant as to *Things*. The nature of it being to bind all that enter it, not only to *God*, but to the *Fraternity*, as hath been said; and that, not only to private Christian duties, but to all Church duties. As by *Circumcision* Covenanters became bound to the whole Law, so by *Baptism* persons become bound to the whole Gospel.

By the Church covenant of *Circumcision*, *Gen.* 17. renewed afterwards *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12.

13. Mr. *Cotton* telleth us, they were joyned not only to the Lord, but to the Officers of the Church; the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, Deut. 12. 19. to mutual *watchfulneſs*, Levit. 19.17.

Things being thus, it followeth unavoidably, that the Argument of the Brethren, for mutual particular covenanting, giving power to Officers and Members one over another, and without which they have no ſuch power, is wholly avoided: For that Chriſt's Officers, by Chriſt's appointment, belong to all Chriſt's people; ſo that wherever God's people come, without any ſuch covenanting, Officers are bound to take care of them, and for them; and Chriſt's people are bound to hear and obey them, as Miniſters and Officers to them while they are with him. And all Chriſtians, where ever they come among other Chriſtians, they are ſtill with Brethren, and ſtand charged to perform all the duties of Brethren to them, by the publick Covenant of Baptiſm.

Upon this ground, Mr. *Hudſon* ſaith with great reaſon, *Any viſible Believer, under the ſeal of Baptiſm only, hath an inherent right to worſhip with any other viſible Chriſtians, in confeſſion, petition, praiſe, prophecy, ſinging, and Lord's Supper; and to be intreated by any Miniſter, as an Ambaſſadour of Chriſt,* Hudſon's *Catholick Church*, p. 136.

and is bound to submit to the Admonitions and Reproofs of any Minister, according to the Word.

Again thus:

Hudson's *Catholick Church*, p. 16.

That as all baptized Christians, professors of Saving faith in Christ, have an habitual general Membership; so all Christ's Officers have an habitual indefinite Office. So that if any professed Subject of Christ's Kingdom shall sit down and cohabite with a Church, within the civil limits allotted for such a Congregation, he not only ought to associate with them, but the Officers of that Church ought to take the inspection of him; and if he be dangerously heretical or prophane, and thereby dangerous and offensive, they ought to take care of his Cure, and the preservation of the rest of their Members, by censuring of him whether he will or no.

Thus teacheth that worthy and judicious Divine, Mr. *Hudson.*

The truth is, if it were not thus, particular persons in the Baptismal Covenant might range up and down, live loosely and scandalously, and be subject to no Censure at all.

Again,

Again, they argue for their mutual particular Covenanting, to form the visible Church, thus:

Church Relation is not a natural Relation, but a voluntary; and therefore must be by a Covenant, or mutual agreement. As to make a Woman a wife, or a Man a servant. Arg. 3.

First, I answer, by distinguishing of Church Relation, not being a natural Relation; and I say 'tis true. Grown Heathens being born Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, their Church relation, when any such are admitted into the society of Christians, is, by first taking hold of the Covenant of *Baptism* at age, and that voluntarily: For neither *John Baptist*, nor *Christ*, nor the *Apostles* forced any.

'Tis thus far agreed with the Brethren, that all *Christians* are Covenanters; and that Church relation is founded in covenanting, as the Marriage relation is; but then with this difference: an Alien becometh related to the Church by covenanting with God, not by particular covenanting with this or that particular People or Congregation, as hath been shewn: They become visible Fellow-members, by being visibly

joyned to the ſame Head; as all Fellow-ſervants become Fellow-ſervants by covenanting with the Maſter even of courſe, not by particular covenanting one with another. So is it in the Church; which is the true reaſon, why in Scripture we neither read nor ſee any thing of any *private* or *particular covenanting* of a particular People. By this we diſcover how to anſwer the Brethren, affirming the ſame neceſſity of ſuch particular covenanting to make a Church-member, as particular conſent to make a Wife.

The caſe far differeth, becauſe the Baptiſmal covenant worketh the relation of *Brethren* to all Chriſtian Church-members immediately, whether they will or no: 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. *We are all baptized into one Body, and made to drink into one Spirit.* But the Baptiſmal covenant doth not work a relation between Husband and Wife; it is ſo far from that, that it leaveth perſons at liberty, to marry, or not to marry. It bindeth to the duties of the Relation, if perſons do marry; but doth not work the Relation it ſelf.

It is therefore very eaſie to diſcern, that though there were a neceſſity of particular conſent to make a Woman a wife; that yet there is none, why particular covenanting

with a particular people, should be necessary to make one a Church-member.

Secondly, Touching persons born in the Church, as our case is, they are not born Aliens to the Church, as *Turks* and *Pagans* are, but here their Church relation taketh place with their natural.

All Church-children are born to God, as well and as soon, as to their Natural parents. They are born God's children, as well as their Parents children; which is the express doctrine of *Ezek.* 16. 20, 21. the 20. verse calleth them their *Parents children*, the 21. verse calleth them, *God's children*. They are born Saints, as Saints in Scripture are put *contra*-distinguished from sinners; compare *Gal.* 2. 15. with 1 *Cor.* 7. 13.

So that all Church-children, as they are born with the duty of obedience to Natural parents, and the duty of Brotherly affection to the whole Family: so also with the duty of obedience to Spiritual parents, and of Brotherly, Christian affection to the whole family of Christians. And as Natural brethren are not at liberty, whether they will love the Brotherhood or no, care for them or no; neither are Church-children, when grown up, at any more liberty, whether they will love, and care for the Family of the Heavenly Father or no. And as it is a most un-

natural, horrid, and impious thing, for Children to slight their Mother, and for Brethren to despise and cast off one another: even no less is it for Church-members, born in the Church, when grown up, to despise and pour contempt upon their Mother, the Church, and cast off their Brethren, as if they were *Turks*, *Jews*, or *Pagans*.

Thus it appeareth, that the Arguments of the Brethren, for their new way of Forming the visible Church by *particular Covenanting*, are rotten and unsound.

The Eleventh Propoſition.

That the Brethrens way of Forming the Viſible Church, by their Church-Covenant, is extreamly evil in it ſelf, and of pernicious conſequence to the Church.

BUt before I proceed, I would diſtinguiſh between Church-Infants publick owning the Baptiſmal Covenant at age, before admittance to the Lord's Supper; and entring into a private Church Covenant with a particular people, to form the Church, and to give right to Ordinances by the Word of God. Now, as I affirm the firſt to be highly convenient, and much tending to the general good; ſo I affirm the laſt to be extreamly evil and pernicious.

1. Becauſe it weakneth the reputation of the great Ordinance of Baptiſm, and by degrees prepareth for the neglect and contempt of it. It weakneth the reputation,

of Baptiſm, that is plain; for that it turneth Baptiſm out of Office, out of the office that Jeſus Chriſt himſelf hath appointed it unto. As

Firſt, To be a viſible diſtinguiſhing badg of all the Houſhold ſervants of our great Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, *Gal.* 3. 27. As many as are baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt, with the Brethren. 'Tis as many as enter the Church Covenant.

2. By Divine appointment, Baptiſm ſerveth for the ordinary rite of entrance into the viſible Church or Body of Chriſt, giving right to Church Priviledges; 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. *All baptized perſons are baptized into the body, &c. and made to drink, &c.* The Brethren ſay, all their Church-Covenanters are let into the body, and made to drink, *&c.* Perſons not confederate are no Members of the viſible Church; As of old it was, *Except ye be Circumciſed, ye ſhall not eat the Paſſover:* ſo with us, Except ye be Baptized, ye ſhall not eat the Lord's Supper: But with them, except ye be particular Church-Covenanters, ye ſhall not eat, *&c.*

3. By Divine Appointment, Baptiſm ſerveth for a Bond, to bind all baptiſed perſons to the performance of all Chriſtian and Church Duties; for as Circumciſion of old, made men debtors to the whole Law, ſo Baptiſm

tism putteth men in debt to the whole number of Gospel Duties. Therefore upon all occasions the Apostle useth it to press particulars, as shall be shewn afterward: The Brethren dare not trust to it, but chuse rather to lean upon their own Church-Covenant. Thus we see plainly, how the Brethrens Church-Covenant, turneth the Baptismal Covenant out of office, and consequently weakneth the reputation of it; as is also plain by experience in all the Churches of Congregational Covenanters. 'Tis not only a Post *set* by God's Post, but to *put out God's Post* out of its proper place, and to put their own in the room of it.

Secondly, It involveth the Brethren in the guilt of adding to the Word, in that sense wherein it is unquestionably condemned in *Deut.* 12. because 'tis an adding to God's Word, as God's Word, that which is but a prudential device of their own. As for their old Testament texts for it, they all speak of persons publick Covenanting with God, not private Covenanting of a particular Minister and People one with another, as hath been shewed; and in the New Testament, there is little offered from thence to countenance it. Some indeed go to *Acts* 9. 26. where 'tis said, *Saul assayed to joyn himself to the Disciples*: Because they find the word

word joyn, they fancy a Church Covenant there, and *Paul's* purpose of particular Membership; but *ver.* 10. it is not said, *Saul* offered himself for particular Membership in that Church, neither is any Covenant there. *Ver.* 15. of the same Chapter sheweth, that God had designed him for publick work, *viz.* to bear his name before Kings, Gentiles, *&c.* The plain meaning is, That *Paul*, being lately converted, applieth to converse with the Disciples at *Jerusalem*, who not knowing he was converted to Christianity, were afraid he came to carry them to the Gaol. Again *Acts* 5. 13. There the Brethren find the word *joyn* again; 'tis said of the rest, *durst no man* joyn *himself to them*, meaning the Apostles. But the Text speaketh not of joyning by particular Covenanting, with a particular people; but what is short in the Text of what they want for proof, they make up by the power of imagination. Again, *The Lord* added *to the Church*, Acts 2. Here in the little word *added*, they will have us find a particular Covenant, besides the Baptismal, but there is not the least shadow of it observable by unbyassed men. Lastly, is urged 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. which hath been spoken to and answered already: so that it is a meer humane device without all Scriptural foundation. For as much then,

as the Brethren obtrude it upon the Church, as the Command of God, it must needs involve them in the dreadful guilt of adding to the Word, reproaching the wisdom of Christ, and the fulness and sufficiency of Scripture.

Thirdly, It Un-churches all the Churches in the world, that have not this voluntary Covenant to form them, either explicitely, or implicitely: for they say, a visible Church cannot be without it. Hence *Robinson* telleth Mr. *Bernard*, *That the Constitution of the Church of* England, *for want of this, is a real and substantial Idol, and the Members no subjects of Christs Kingdom:* And applieth to him, and his Parish, *Eph.* 2. 12. affirming plainly, *They were aliens to the common-wealth of Israel:* And by the same reason all other the Reformed-Churches. *Reasons discussed,* p. 84. Pag. 88.

Fourthly, It debarreth the most visible Christians and their seed, of the priviledges of the Sacraments, except they have submitted to a private Church-Covenant: because in their sense, they are aliens to the Common wealth of *Israel* without it.

Fifthly, It cutteth the Sinews, not only of Church-Communion, but private Christian Communion: Mr. *Hooker* telleth us, that the Separatists held, *That not being in a Church hindreth private Christian Communion.* *New England,* Hooker's *Eccl.* p. 20.

nion. And *Robinſon* confeſſeth, *That he and his Church, could not pray for Mr.* Bernard *and his, as Members of the Church of Chriſt.* Mr. *Hudſon* lamentably complaineth thus, ſpeaking of the Brethrens Church-Covenant; *It is raiſed up as a wall of partition between them, and all the reſt of the Churches of Chriſt.* So that they will not communicate with them, though never ſo religious, reformed, and eminent Congregations; nor ſuffer any of them, though never ſo godly, and ſo acknowledged by them, to communicate with themſelves. They will not baptize any of our Children, nor ſuffer us to baptize any of theirs: nay, they will not ſo much as ſtay to ſee any of our Children baptized, but run out as if the Church were on fire over their heads. Again it cauſeth great breaches in Families, cauſeth jarres, and alienation of affections, vain janglings and diſputes, and Un-Chriſtian heats and animoſities, in ſtead of ſweet Chriſtian love, unity, and communion, and mutual edification. Again, Families cannot joyn ſo cordially together in Prayer, having ſuch ſiniſter thoughts one of another: nor Catechiſing, nor calling over the Word publickly taught, with much more to the ſame purpoſe, which poor *England* hath felt and found by moſt woful experience, not to be mentioned with dry eyes.

Hudſon's *Poſtſcript to Cathol. Ch.* p. 48.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, It narroweth the Church to nothing; perſons non-confederate in their Church-Covenant, are not, with them, Members of the viſible Church: Now how few Chriſtians there either are, or ever were in any ſuch Confederacy, is eaſie to be judged, for that the Church of Chriſt never knew, nor heard of any ſuch device till of late years.

Seventhly, It infringeth the juſt liberty of Paſtors and people, and the Authority of the whole over particulars, to diſpoſe them for the general good: As for inſtance, a Miniſter by long and hard ſtudy, experience and practice, becometh fit for more publick ſervice, which the common good of the whole calleth for. This Church-Covenant ſhall fix him where he is, except he can by any means get a releaſe from his Covenant, though never ſo much to the general loſs and damage. In a word, It contracteth the ſpirit to ſuch a degree of narrowneſs and ſelfiſhneſs, that it maketh perſons not look like Children of their Heavenly Father, who hath the whole World for the object of his Charity, and commandeth all his Diſciples to imitate him. And 'tis expreſly contrary to the Apoſtle, *Let no man ſeek his own things, but every man anothers weal*, 1 Cor. 10. 34.

An Extract of some passages out of certain LETTERS, *from some of the most eminent Divines of the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas; shewing their utter dislike of* Independency. *Written to one Mr.* Buchanan, *a* Scotch *Gentleman at* London, *In* 1644.

To my much Honoured, Vertuous, and Learned Friend, Mr. Buchanan.

SIR,

THE Reverend Pastor of our Church, Mr. *Breittinger*, after the Receipt of your Letters, being himself much indisposed by reason of his great Age, has charged

charged me to return you Answer in his Name.

That that Independency of Consistories, whereof you write, is not approved by our Churches. That however our Churches are very careful to preserve their Christian Liberty, they be no less to Repress by their Synodical Censures, all Licentiousness and Libertinism whatsoever. That just so the Consistory or Colloque held at *Antioch*, depended upon the Judgment and Censure of the Synod held at *Jerusalem*. That the Spirits of the Prophets ought to be subject to the Prophets.

Zurich the
18. *July*,
1644.

Rodolphus Stuckius.

To

To Monſieur Buchanan, *a* Scotch *Gentleman at* London.

SIR,

I Have ſhewed our Conſiſtory the Writing, which you were pleaſed to addreſs to them by my Means, whereby you demand of us our Advice: and particularly, as to the Members of your Synod, that maintain, *That all Churches may be ſufficiently governed by their Conſiſtories, every one apart, without any dependence at all upon the greater Aſſemblies, that have fuller Authority; ſuch as are the Colloques, and the Provincial and National Synods.* To which head, I have direction from them to write unto you, That we can do no other than redouble our Sighs, to underſtand how the Devil ſoweth his Tares during the dark Night of your affliction, and ſtirreth up ſuch diverſity of Spirits, who through a Zeal void of knowledge, tear in pieces that ſeamleſs-Coat of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Not to ſtay my ſelf upon the Name of *Independents*, which they take, or others call them by, though it deſerve for ever to be baniſh't from amongſt thoſe that are Or-

thodox, and to be left to the Councils, or to the Biſhop of *Rome*. Know we not, that the Internal kingdom of our Lord Jeſus, Sovereign Monarch of the Church, which tendeth all to unity, to conſummate all in *one*, as he is *One* with his Father, cannot poſſibly entertain an union without a communion of the Spirit; and is not this communion extreamly weakned by means of the diſtractions of the ſeveral Members of the body, and by reaſon of the obſtruction of the Veſſels, which ſhould ſerve her as ſo many conduit-pipes. How ſhould this Spirit freely paſs up and down, from one part of the body to the other, for the entire aggregation of the body of the Saints by its influence, if a ſingularity of Diſcipline, as a thick hedge, interpoſe and choak up its way? How ſhould this Body ever grow into a *perfect man*, according to the meaſure of that *perfect ſtature of Chriſt*, in all its joynts, if ſo be the *foot* have no need of the *eye*; if the *inferiour* members diſjoyn and looſe themſelves from the more *noble* parts, and the noble deſpiſe the leſs honourable, which yet are the more neceſſary? How can the building of the Spiritual Temple be advanced, if the Workmen will needs do their work every one *apart*, and will not maintain a cloſe correſpondence

dence and understanding one with the other? Or this Heavenly Army, How shall it ever be able to vanquish its Enemies, when we see its Squadrons break thus their Files, and that its bounds are so badly ranged? The Scripture often tyeth the *power* of the Church and her *beauty*, in one band together; but neither the one nor the other of these Graces can ever preserve its strength, if once men come to set at naught that exquisite prop and ornament that General assemblies afford it. There it is that the Church reinforceth her self, and where she maketh her self formidable, as an Army that marcheth with Banners, flying in a kind of holy Triumph. There it is, where her countenance appeareth glorious, after she hath gotten out the stains, and filled up the wrinckles, wherewith particular mens Opinions and Passions had eclipsed her lustre. There it is, that her head cometh to shine as bright, as though she were crowned with Stars, and that she beareth in her hands those two staves of *beauty* and *bands*.

And to save my self the labour of alledging the policy of the Church of the *Jews*, wherein notwithstanding it is evident, that the great Councils of the *Sanhedrin* had an Authentick direction. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, in their dispute touching

Ceremonies, had they their recourse to any private Man, or particular Consistories; or decided they the point in controverse every one by his private authority, as he conceived of it? *No*; They assembled a Council, which should serve as a glass and pattern to all the posterity of the Faithful, even to the end of the World.

Again, We know not any one Church, that in a conformity with the Primitive Church accounteth not her self happy, when she can see the Servants of God gathered into an holy Assembly; regulating with common consent the *Decorum* of the Service, or else the points of Doctrine, by Reason and Scripture. And for our Selves, since you are pleased to demand our advice, We protest to all the World, how great enemies soever we are of Tyranny, that we are no whit less of *Anarchy*. We abominate and detest, together with the Usurpations of the Pope, the madness of the *Anabaptists*.

Your

Geneva, the 18. *of September*, 1644. *Thrice humble Servant*, MORUS.

More

More French *Ministers have these passages in a Letter to Mr.* Buchanan, *about the same time.*

WE are much affected, that among them that put their hand to so holy and necessary a work, there are some that pass from one extream to another, willing that every particular Church be so absolute and Sovereign, that it depend not upon any other for its direction, nor be obliged to give an account to other Churches of its Government.

We conceive, this is not only to pull in pieces the Garment, but even the body of our Lord, and his Spiritual Tabernacle, and to take away from the Church the Title of the *Communion of Saints*, and to divide that which God hath joyned together by his Holy Spirit; which being the *Spirit of Peace*, inspireth where ever it bloweth, *peace*, *concord*, and *brotherly*, and *charitable communication*, and leadeth us to lend each other

of us the hand, to maintain the whole together in a Spiritual ſympathy.

Beſides, That under the pretence of caſting out *Tyranny*, it is to introduce and bring in an *Anarchy*, and confuſion into the Houſe of God, and to open a wide gate to all ſorts of Diſaſters, which are apparently unavoidable, if every particular Church ſhake off all manner of yoke. If we open a gate to ſuch Licentiouſneſs, the *Socinians*, the *Anabaptiſts*, and generally all ſorts of Hereticks, Fanaticks, and Enthuſiaſts, ſhall quickly find the Mean of ſeducing the people, to poſſeſs themſelves of the Pulpits, and ſo to make havock of the Churches of God.

As to that that they permit any one whatſoever, if he have the ability, to preach publickly in their Aſſemblies, notwithſtanding that he have not *Orders*; this is one of the greateſt Diſorders that can poſſibly happen in the World. *This*, What is it other but to bring in all kind of Fanaticks and Enthuſiaſts, and expoſe *Religion* to be made a Laughing-ſtock to the Enemies of God's Truth; and to make of the Houſe of God, which is a *Houſe of Order*, a *Babel* of Diſorder and horrible confuſion?

Abundance more to the ſame purpoſe; as alſo againſt *Univerſal Toleration*, which they call a *Libertiniſm* not to be endured in the Houſe of God, and they ſay, *it flatly againſt God's Word.*

To tranſcribe their Arguments would be too tedious; I therefore forbear.

The Judgment of another Eminent Divine in France concerning Independency, *declared in a Letter to Mr.* Buchanan, *here at* London.

I Am advertised by a Friend, a Vertuous man and fearing God, that certain persons find fault with the *Order* established in our Churches, by the which the *Consistories* are subject unto *Colloques*, and the *Colloques* unto *Provincial Synods*, and the *Provincial Synods* unto *National Synods*. They would have every *Consistory* to have an absolute Authority, and not to depend upon any Superiour assembly.

My Friend asketh my judgment. The thing is of such a nature, and such a weight, that I could not deny him his Request.

I say then, That those that make such Propositions ought not to be believed: If men followed their advice, there could nothing follow but a turning the Church upside down, and an utter confusion. It falleth out often, that two Pastors of one and the same Church shall fall out amongst themselves, and divide the

the Flock into two contrary Factions: In this case of necessity we must have recourse unto a company and power Superiour. But if the Church have but one Pastor, and he be a Vicious man, and of a Scandalous life, and be supported by the whole *Consistory*, or that the *Consistory* be divided; there is no remedy for this Evil, but by *Colloques* and *Synods*, that have power to suspend and depose such a Pastor: There being but one Pastor in this Church, and he deserving to be deposed, Who is he that shall depose him? The Elders of the *Consistory* alone, shall they pronounce sentence of Deposition against him? What if any one among the people be suspended from the *Holy Supper*, or Excommunicated; To whom shall he have his recourse to be received again into the Church? And to whom shall he make his complaint, if the *Consistory*, which hath unjustly condemned him, have an Independent and Irresragable authority?

Synods are chiefly buried about hearing the complaints of particular Churches, and to judge of *Appellations*. If you deny that power to *Synods*, they have no more to do, and their Convocation shall be to no use; for in vain should they pronounce Judgments which were not in their power to put in execution. Every *Consistory* should govern

it

in ſelf after its own fancy: as if in a great Country one ſhould make of every Village a Soveraignty, that were to introduce an Order, which, ſince the daies of the Apoſtles, was never practiced until this time.

There are a many little *Country Churches*, whereof the Conſiſtory is compoſed of one Paſtor, who is of no deep underſtanding, and of four or five perſons that are Elders of the Church; ſhall we give to ſuch a Church or Conſiſtory an *Independent authority?* And that Paſtor hapning to die, theſe perſons, ſhall they have power to chuſe another; or give him *Impoſition of hands?* Are they competent Judges of a Miniſters ſufficiency?

What if, becauſe of the affliction of the Church, it be neceſſary to celebrate a Faſt, throughout all the Churches of the Kingdom. Who ſhall ordain this Faſt? Who ſhall appoint the Day? If the complaints of all the Churches muſt be repreſented to the Sovereign Prince, Who ſhall depute? Who ſhall preſent the Requeſts of the whole body of the Churches of the Kingdom?

If for certain Emergent occaſions it be neceſſary to change ſomething in the Diſcipline of the Church, and to make new Ordinances to bind all the Churches, Can that be done

done by *Independent Consistories*, not subject to any general Rule?

Briefly, We must hold constantly, that the dependance of Inferiour Companies being subject to Superiours, is the Bond that entertaineth the *Union of the Church*, which being cut asunder, there should be no more correspondence, and we should see a horrible confusion. No man can be judge in his own cause. If there be a strife between two particular Churches, as it falleth out very often, not one of *these* Churches can be judge, they must address themselves to some Superiour authority.

I will not believe, that these *Independents* have intelligence with the Adversaries, and their aim is under colour of *Reformation* to cast us into a confusion, which might expose us to be laught at by those who are our Opposites: I would rather believe, they erre for want of experience and knowledge of that which is possible and profitable for the Church of God.

The

The Judgment of a Great Divine in Holland *concerning* Independency, *declared in a Letter directed to Mr.* Buchanan.

I Doubt not, but firmly believe, that they that would introduce *Independency of Churches*, would bring in an *Anarchy*, a confusion, and all sorts of license, to furnish all Pulpits with men of Fanatick spirits, as also your Churches with Schisms. I make no question, but many of them are carried to these Opinions with a good Meaning, that they think therein they do well; but the dangerous consequences of such an *Independency*, should it be established, would discover more than we believe can ever be sufficiently discovered till it be established. As many Altars shall you then have erected one against the other, you have Churches. One Church would side it self with *Paul*, another with *Cephas*, another with *Apollos*: God preserve you from these horrid confusions. You should see

ſee a ſweet *Oeconomy*, if every particular Family ſhould once come to be *Independent*, without any policy or dependance on the publick; and what then would become of the poor Church of God.

Here

Here followeth the Act, *Verbatim*, of the National Synod of the Reformed Churches of *France*, Assembled *Decemb.* 26. 1644. to prevent Independency to take place among them.

UPon what hath been reported by the Commissioners of the Maritime Provinces, That divers coming from forreign Countries, and going under the name of Independants, because they teach that every particular Congregation ought to be governed by its own particular Laws, without any depending of any in Ecclesiastical Matters, and without any obligation to acknowledg the authority of Colloques, or Classes and Synods, for its government and conduct, setling their abode

abode in this Kingdom: And hereafter they might cause here amongst us great inconveniences if in due time there were not order taken; the Assembly fearing lest the contagion of this poyson gaining ground insensibly, should throw trouble and disorder amongst us, and judging the said Sect of Independents, to be not only prejudicial to the Church of God, in so far, that it endeavoureth to bring in confusion, opening a gate to all kind of singularities and extravagancies, and taking away all means of any Remedy to the evil, but also most dangerous to the State; where, if it had place, there might be as many Religions set up, as there be Parishes, or particular Congregations: Doth enjoyn to all the Provinces, and particularly to the Maritimes, to take heed that the evil take no foot in the Churches of this Kingdom; to the end that Peace

and

and Uniformity, as well in Religion as in Discipline, may be inviolably preserved, and that nothing may be brought in amongst us which may alter in any kind the service due to their Majesties.

Garissole Moderator *Basnage* adjoyns *Blondel* and *Coq.* Secretaries.

FINIS.

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Lastly,

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ERRATA.

PAg. 3 l. 10. inſtead of Mr. *Edwards*, read *They*, and put Mr. *Edwards* in the Margent. p. 9. l. 8. add the word *in* to *England*. p. 17. l. 5. leave out the word *they*, joined to the word *not*. p. 27 l. 24. r. plain. p. 171. l. 18. r. diſcovered. p. 213. l. 19. r. *John* 3. p. 221. l. 5. r. inviſible.

BOOKS

Books Printed for, and Sold by *Walter Kettilby* at the *Bishop's* Head in St. *Paul's* Church-yard.

DR. *More's* Reply to a late Answer to his Antidote against *Idolatry*, with the Appendix. *Octavo.*

H. Mori Opera Theologica. Fol.

Spenceri dissertatio de Urim & Thummim. Octavo.

Frederici Lossii Observationes Medicæ. Oct.

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Account of *Familism*, as it is revived and propagated by the *Quakers*. Oct.

Some Opinions of M. *Hobbes* considered, in a second Dialogue between *Philautus* and *Timothy*. Oct.

Breerwood's Enquiries into the Diversities of Languages. *Oct.*

Mr.

Mr. *Allen*'s Myſtery of Iniquity unfolded, or the falſe Apoſtles and Authors of *Popery* compared, *&c.* Oct.

Animadverſions on Mr. *Ferguſon*, about Juſtification. *Oct.*

Friendly Addreſs to the Nonconformiſts, beginning with the Anabaptiſts. *Oct.*

Mr. *Lamb*'s Stop to the Courſe of Separation. *Oct.*

Sherlock's Diſcourſe of the Knowledg of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Oct.

Defence and Continuation of the Diſcourſe, *&c.* Oct.

Anſwer to a ſcandalous Pamphlet, entituled a Dialogue between Satan and *Sherlock*. Qu.

Dr. *Worthington*'s Great Duty of Self-reſignation to the Divine Will. *Oct.*

Mr. *Hotchkis* Diſcourſe of the Imputation of *Chriſt*'s Righteouſneſs to Us, and our Sins to Him. *Oct.*

Gage's Survey of the Weſt *Indies*. Oct.

Dr. *Goodall*'s Vindication of the Colledge of Phyſicians. *Oct.*

Smith's Pourtract of old Age. *Oct.*

Webſter's Hiſtory of Metals. *Quar.*

Dr. *More*'s Remarques upon two late Ingenious Diſcourſes, the one an Eſſay of the Gravitation and Non-gravitation of fluid Bodies, the other Obſervations touching the *Torricellian* experiment. *Oct.*

Syden-

Sydenham's Observationes Medicæ. Oct.

An Account of Mr. *Ferguson's* Common-Place-Book, in two Letters between Mr. *Sherlock* and Mr. *Glanvil*. Quar.

Dr. *Grew's* Comparative Anatomy of Trunks, together with an Account of their Vegetation grounded thereupon. *Oct.*

Mr. *Hallywell's* Sacred Method of Saving Humane Souls by Jesus Christ. Oct.

Mr. *Sharp's* two Sermons before the Lord Mayor. *Qu.*

Amyraldus Discourse of Divine Dreams, mention'd in Scripture: With Mr. *Lowd's* Preface. Oct.

Comenii Janua Ling. Lat. Eng. with Cuts, Oct.

THE END.